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Three Measures of Meal

A Study in Religion

BY

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TO MY WIFE

My Good Comrade of Many Years

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PREFACE

THE following book is intended as a contribution to the study of Christian Origins with the suggestion (strongly underlined) that the application of the principles and knowledge acquired in such a study may be helpful in the solution of the ever-recurring problems of Christian life and thought. It is my profound conviction that everything which is good and wholesome in human nature and human life is capable of being raised to higher power, its beauty and value immeasurably enhanced by being brought into touch with Jesus Christ.

In attempting to show this I have reviewed history before and after the contact took place, selecting typical conditions and representative persons as illustrative of my main thesis.

Furthermore, in the course of this study I have felt impelled to lay emphasis on what seemed significant both in fact and character, not in support of any preconception, but in the interests of truth as it presented itself to me. For instance, in regard to the *Praeparatio Evangelica* (a phrase which perhaps has an old-fashioned ring but whose idea lies imbedded in the New Testament), I recognize the value of Apocalyptic, the importance of Philo, and the (generally) unconscious leading of 'the nations' towards the Light. Then, after contact has been established it seemed to be necessary to note the effect of that contact. St. Paul furnishes a sublime example of such effect, but he stands pre-eminent because he was naturally a great

personality. Others are transformed according to their capacity and circumstances. Moreover, what applies to individuals applies also to communities; witness the Church at Corinth and the Christians of whom Pliny and Lucian speak. Furthermore, the organization of the Church is not something imposed from without, but is the development of its inner life in response to its needs.

The writing of this little foreword gives me the opportunity of putting on record the kindness and sympathy of many friends—among them the late Rev. H. F. Hamilton, D.D., the Very Rev. A. E. Burn, the Dean of Salisbury, my colleagues, one and all, of the University of Bishop's College, Lennoxville, and lastly, and above all, my good friend, Mr. R. J. Meekren, who gave me constant encouragement, who carefully read type-written MSS., and assisted most helpfully in preparing the index.

The index makes no pretence of being exhaustive, but I trust it will be found useful and sufficient.

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INTRODUCTION

THAT the Christian religion has to some extent transformed the world is no matter of controversy. Every intelligent person takes cognizance of the fact; it is beyond dispute. The querulous hyperbole of the Thessalonian non-believing Jews, 'These (men) have turned the world upside down,'[1] has been amply fulfilled.

But the converse of this fact has not been so generally recognized though it has received some consideration at the hands of historians and more, possibly, within the present generation than ever before. The fact that the world has reacted upon the Church is vaguely felt by all, half understood by many, intelligently appreciated by only a few. It is true that no writer of any distinction dealing with the progress of religious life and thought entirely disregards it and there are some in recent years who, investigating the origins of Christianity, have exaggerated and over-estimated the reactive influence of the world. These are for the most part men of great scholastic attainments and high authority in the field of scientific history, and their judgements, and even their conjectures, are entitled to serious consideration. Apart from such investigators who are in a minority, and are regarded with suspicion by the orthodox as Rationalists, or Modernists,[2] the general stream of historical research

[1] Acts xvii. 6.

[2] These terms are by no means synonymous but the suspicion falls on both. Rationalism in its proper sense, not used as an epithet, is indispensable to the arrival at true knowledge; Modernism, if by it is meant the effort to interpret God's Truth to the contemporary age, is the only reasonable *modus operandi* and is essential not only to the Church's progress but also to its health.

has been in the direction of discovering, classifying, recording new, or elucidating old, facts relative to the wonderful effects of the religion of Christ upon an antagonistic, or indifferent, social order rather than in observation of the influence of environment upon that religion. This is natural and right; the emphasis falls appropriately. Force is greater than matter, and—using that illustration which has the highest sanction possible—the leaven is force, the three measures of meal are matter;[1] therefore, the leaven is the chief factor. Yet the other factor cannot be neglected; it is essential. The active agent fails to express itself, fails to fulfil its purpose if the passive factor be wanting. So if the leaven represented all the force of Divine Love which Our Blessed Lord made available, the three measures of meal represent 'the mass of humanity' which is to be permeated, energized, and transformed thereby. It is consequently of importance to appraise the nature of the latter before it is brought into touch with the transforming force, and then to note the effects of the contact, and further to recognize and estimate the elements which 'the mass of humanity' contributes to the *corpus permixtum*. That these are not negligible must be inferred from the result of the contact of leaven and meal. When these two factors combine, the resultant is not leaven of greater potency than before, nor is it meal in greater quantity, but it is a new substance, a substance which

But the terms have acquired an invidious meaning. A Rationalist in this latter sense is one who denies the Supernatural; a Modernist, one who so accommodates himself to so-called modern thought as to deny the facts connected with the Life of Jesus and the earliest generations of Christianity, or at least to evacuate them of significance, and yet to accept the Church and the Christ whom the Church preaches—a most untenable position. One is a product of German Protestantism; the other a by-product of Latin ecclesiasticism. Karl Drews (or Strauss of an earlier generation) is typical of the one; Loisy of the other.

[1] See Allnatt, *Witness of St. Matthew*, p. 154.

requires further treatment (kneading and cooking), and then becomes fresh bread.[1]

Thus the Kingdom of God affects the kingdoms of the world. The resultant is no longer a thing purely and remotely Divine, nor a thing futilely human ; it is a thing transformed by its concealed force from its original dry and unpalatable condition into something wholesome and nourishing. It is not leaven ; it is not meal. It is a *tertium quid* which the blows of discipline and the furnace of affliction have made to become the nourishment of nations and the food of saints.

The ancient fabric of society, the ancient modes of thought, except in so far as they have been absorbed and assimilated through the vital force of the Christian communities, have vanished.[2] On account of its wide diffusion, on account of the immense quantity of material it is engaged in subduing, this vital force may not seem so powerful in later generations as in the earlier stages of its operation, but it remains ; and further supplies of the same Divine energy are continually forthcoming from the original Source as the Christian Society needs and expresses its need. Receptiveness and a kind of yearning, aspiring quality in the human element of the combination are the inevitable conditions of any new accession of spiritual power. The history of the Christian Society discounts all pessimism, and whatever fluctuations of spiritual energy there have been, and may be, the vital force is as strong

[1] A figure of speech which Professor Burkitt is said to have employed *en passant* in discussing the action of the Christian religion upon mankind.

[2] There are certain secular survivals, e. g. the framework, and many of the provisions, of Civil Law which are directly inherited from the Imperialized Republic of Rome. It is, however, well to remember that the Empire of Rome was Christianized generations before its final collapse, and the influence of the new faith is seen in the reformed code of Justinian which humanized and elevated the old Roman Law.

as ever, and, through the transformed meal, which we may call the Catholic Church, is preparing itself for greater conquests than those of Primitive Times, preparing to overcome the dark shadows of Africa and the restlessness of what so lately was called ' the unchanging East '.

By reason of this vital force, this Divine leaven, the Catholic Church is the one entity which has had a continuous, unbroken, and majestic life. It unites us with the days of the Caesars, the glory of Imperial Rome, and the brilliance of the old philosophies. The Christian Society was the heir of the ancient world, and through it has been dispensed to modern civilization what would otherwise have been irretrievably lost, the thought, the law, the custom of Hellas and of Rome. The Church has taken these treasures into her bosom and has redistributed them among the races of mankind, who are but dimly conscious of the source from which their blessings come. Accordingly, it may be of service to attempt an investigation and to estimate the value of those treasures to which the Church fell heir ; to appraise the measure of her indebtedness to the old order at whose hands she suffered so much, and out of whose decay she has risen to such a pitch of world-wide pre-eminence. The three measures of meal are second only in importance to the leaven which is brought into contact with them, and the contributions of the Hebrew, the Hellene, and the Roman to the glory of the Church (and indeed those elements which hampered and retarded her growth, or temporarily reduced her spiritual power) should receive the serious consideration of students of religious history.

Seldom except by writers who labour to explain away the Divine character of the Church has the human factor in the conjunction of force and material been treated at large. But by the writers to whom I have referred much is made of what they describe as ' the acute seculariza-

tion'[1] of Christianity by the reaction of the material which surrounds it or which it has partially absorbed. Dr. Harnack in his invaluable work, *The History of Dogma*, implies that not only the Catholic Church of to-day but even that of the age of Constantine differed fundamentally from the Primitive Christian Society—that even the Primitive Christian Society had degenerated considerably from the teaching of its Founder, and that the only hope for Christianity in the modern world is for it to divest itself of the trappings and accretions of centuries and return naked to the simple doctrine of Jesus, the Galilaean Carpenter, who would not recognize it in its present garb.[2] Protestantism is a failure because the Reformation was not thorough-going enough; but Catholicism is the great mistake.[3] This is all stated calmly and dispassionately. Harnack and members of his school are not violent, irrational fanatics, but sober, careful historians and theologians,[4] who are as fair-minded as men can be who shut their eyes to, or depreciate, at least implicitly, the supernatural elements in the Church, and are, therefore, in despair as to its power of self-correction, and its ability to diffuse its leaven-working forces in the fabric of modern civilization.[4]

[1] A favourite term of Harnack's *History of Dogma*: it is also used by Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, p. 59), whose theory is more radical and less plausible than that of Harnack. The latter regards the writings of the New Testament as the beginnings of the secularization of Christianity.

[2] See Harnack, *What is Christianity?* The principles enunciated in this little book are also held substantially (I believe) by the great French Liberal theologian, M. Auguste Sabatier. Dr. Hatch in an earlier generation ventilated similar views though with more reserve in (1) *The Influence of Greek Ideas upon the Christian Church* (Hibbert Lectures), and (2) *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches* (Bampton Lectures).

[3] I have given in the paragraph above what I hope is not an unfair glance at the drift of Dr. Harnack's argument in *The History of Dogma*.

[4] These remarks apply only partially to Dr. Hatch.

In the process of his inquiry Dr. Harnack follows down the stream of Christian life and thought, and fails (I think) to prove any genuine loss of continuity.[1] The world-environment affects the Church, changes its outer semblance, to some extent dissipates its power and weakens its appeal, but has never devitalized it, not converted it into something which it was not. In fact the gain has been greater than the loss. The spirit within the Christian Society is sufficient ultimately to override the evil consequences of association with obstinate or corrupt material and turn to its own uses the treasures of human life, each new element adding something to the richness, and tending towards the perfection and fulfilment of the Divine Purpose.

This then forms, albeit hazardous by reason of its complexity, a fascinating, and in the mind of the writer, a valuable subject of investigation—the extent and the strength of the various elements which surrounded the Church in its early days, which affected and modified its growth, and which contributed something to its organic life. To this aspect of ecclesiastical history the following pages are intended as a slight contribution. As regards the active factor of the combination, the leaven, the ever-present, vitalizing, assimilative force, this will be considered only as it bears directly on the subject in hand. It is not easy to do this—to keep the two factors distinct. In describing the world-environment before the contact, the task will be comparatively simple. It is after contact that the difficulty arises.[2] Where does the human element begin and end? To what extent has it been influenced by the vital element? Is the influence of this partially affected humanity, of one kind or another, a permanent

[1] This, perhaps, the great German theologian would himself acknowledge—his contention being rather that the stream took a wrong turn, and is dissipating itself, than that it cannot be traced to its source.

[2] This difficulty is all the greater since the contact of the two forces results in a fusion.

one? These and other questions which might be put suggest the seriousness of the task.

Few things in this world remain unaffected by their environment, and it would be surprising if the Church should prove an exception. The Anglo-Saxon, so called, despite his persistence of type, varies considerably according to his habitat, occupation, and climatic conditions.[1] The people with whom he associates modify his racial characteristics. Moreover, the Englishman of the twentieth century differs considerably from his Elizabethan ancestor. The world-spirit changes, the social order changes. The natural, simple, and yet comparatively crude society of Alfred's day is decidedly unlike that which flourished under the Feudal system, and that again is unlike the conditions of society to which we are accustomed where wealth is the standard of efficiency and the source of power. The change is often gradual and sometimes imperceptible, and while the plutocratic period is at its zenith, the ideals and standards evolved during the Plantagenet régime still have an appreciable influence upon human conduct and men's manners. To what issue the present struggle between capital and labour is tending no one can confidently affirm, but we may be sure it will be as different from contemporary conditions as contemporary conditions are different from what have gone before. Yet the future will contain the life of the present as the present contains that of the past. No age stands solitary or independent, but each is a product of what immediately precedes it, and holds in its womb the germ of what shall be. The modern Englishman is his Tudor prototype, modified and moulded by the forces of four centuries of development.

[1] Compare the Yorkshire Dalesman with the Yorkshire weaver, or the American of Anglo-Saxon descent, and the Australian, with the home-keeping Englishman. We might also note the growth of national characteristics which are beginning to differentiate the Anglo-Canadian and the Anglo-American.

Now this remarkable continuity, coupled with variation in secular history, is accepted as a commonplace and ought to be equally axiomatic in reference to that sphere where spiritual power and human life associate and mingle. Yet it is here that men grow sceptical. Either they refuse to believe that the Spirit of God has voluntarily conditioned Himself and that He is working to secure a religious end in a way analogous to the processes of the Divine Purpose on the physical plane; or else they deny His Presence in the Church, and argue that everything which has been effected by the Christian religion is the result of what, in lack of a more thoroughly satisfactory term, we must call natural causes.[1]

But just as it is necessary on the lower plane to postulate a First Cause for all (natural) phenomena, so on the higher plane it is necessary to postulate a spiritual Power for the production of spiritual effects. Christians identify the First Cause and the spiritual Power as God; God working on different planes which ultimately converge and merge in One Grand Unity—this Unity when it has been fully unfolded and consummated is the final expression of the Divine Love. And just as the First Cause may be traced in all phenomena, so the Spirit of God may be traced in the energies and operations of each succeeding generation of religious life. And as we look and find in Nature and in human life, change, variation, modification, and development; so it is reasonable to seek for analogous processes in the history of religion, and not less so in the history of that religion which man could not attain to except it had been revealed; for though the One Party to it is constant and unchangeable, the other, man, the receiving party,

[1] Gibbon is the classic instance of this type of mind (cf. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, cap. xv, and note ' the five causes of the growth of Christianity '). The type is not extinct but it has grown more humble and less contemptuous.

is motional and variable. The parallel, as far as it is necessary for us to carry it, is exact.[1]

But the subject is so immense! The adequate prosecution of it might well be left to a large and learned staff of scholars such as that which has brought the Cambridge Modern History to a successful issue. Yet the pooling of all the talents, as in the task I have mentioned, possesses some manifest disadvantages. Chief of these I would place a lack of unity of purpose. Personal predilections, prejudices, views are sure to appear and be more or less out of harmony one with the other. 'Quot homines, tot sententiae.' Of course it cannot be helped. Yet it does mar the effect of the joint effort. No doubt a great object is attained; the reader possesses in one imposing series expert contemporary judgement upon a long period of history. He does not have to ransack a library to discover such an array of specialism; it is presented to him in fairly comfortable dimensions. Notwithstanding, unless he is a specialist himself of considerable ability, the student is likely to fail in obtaining a sound working knowledge, a comprehensive grasp, of an extended period treated in this encyclopaedic manner. A clearer notion will be acquired, albeit a partial one, from the pages of some *magnum opus* inscribed by a single pen. And the bias may be more surely guarded against in that case than when it shifts with each fresh specialist.

However, such is the flood of new material which recent

[1] At first sight the above paragraph may appear to be contradictory to the main view of the Thesis. It is not so, however; it rather confirms it. The *Source* of the vital force is constant and unchangeable—the application of the force necessitates movement, action, and economy. It is limited by the conditions of that upon which it operates. That upon which it operates, relatively lifeless, being without cohesion, without organism, moves and shifts constantly (as the particles of meal shift when in mass), and is subject to the action of external forces, so that it may be scattered and lost.

research has unearthed, that he would be a bold man indeed who would attempt single-handed a task such as Edward Gibbon set himself towards the close of the eighteenth century. Even then, and for one of his great gifts and amazing industry, the task was stupendous. To-day it would be impossible. It is true that Milman and de Pressensé in the last generation each accomplished labours which though narrower in range may fairly be compared to that of Gibbon; and Dr. Harnack in our own times, in a field of inquiry narrower still, may be said to have rivalled the eighteenth-century historian, for though he voluntarily limited his studies, he prosecuted them with greater intensity and reached results that are more valuable to the modern inquirer than those of Gibbon.[1]

That the field of investigation which I have selected will be productive of much fruit I dare not say. 'Solvitur ambulando.' In an attempt to make it fruitful I must place limitations on the subject and confine myself within them. First of all, in a very wide sense the subject may be described as (1) the mass of humanity before contact with the vital force, (2) the change which follows upon the contact.

Does the course of development lead us to suppose that the mass diminishes the vital force in any way? Does this force vanish, become dissipated, or corrupt? Does it, as it were, resign its efforts in the face of material which is so obstinate in nature, or so great in quantity, that it despairs of effecting a complete transformation, and is content with a partial one? Or, to put the question in still another form, has the mass of humanity obtained greater control than was intended in the original design, and has there come about a sort of compromise between

[1] Not because of his superior merit, but because of his better position, in a chronological sense, and because of his concentration upon one particular aspect of history.

the two factors of the contact in such a way that the one is satisfied with a lesser victory, and the other rescues itself from complete subjection? No believer in the Divine character of the religion founded by Christ could hesitate to deliver a strong negative to these questions when presented in their most drastic form. He could not, for instance, allow it to be understood that the Divine Purpose had been frustrated even partially, or that the Holy Spirit had come to a working accommodation with the world. His belief in the Divine Guidance of the Church would prevent him from assenting to the view that the vitality of Christendom had either vanished, or been corrupted, or diverted from its original aim. On the other hand, as a student of the course of Christian development he might give, and I think would be justified in giving, a qualified affirmative to the question, has the mass diminished the vital force in any way? Or again, has the vital force become dissipated? But he would hasten to add that this diminution, or dissipation, was relative rather than absolute; at the worst, temporary in its character, and could not affect the ultimate result—that the nature of things would indubitably lead one to expect that a certain amount of vital force expended upon a large mass of material, or a more impregnable material, would work more slowly than when the material was less in quantity, and more amenable to influence. Moreover, the trend of history seems to bear out our apologist's contention that the influence of the vital force has been diminished only relatively and temporarily. Periods of reformation and revival of spiritual life mark the stages of religious development, and point to the permanent presence of the vital force, engaged successfully in its leavening processes, absorbing and transforming the material of its environment—changing the dry meal of human nature into the fresh bread of a divinely moved mankind. Times

of deterioration, or what may seem deterioration to the casual observer, soon or late give place to greater spiritual activity, an accelerated assimilation of material, and the Kingdom of God is recognized as being among men : on other occasions it ' cometh not with observation '. But the vital force is never at rest, is always moving, always absorbing ; it is irresistible and unconquerable. History proves it to be so.

However, this subject must be treated representatively and on, comparatively speaking, a small scale. Let us consider the mass of humanity as the vital force first approached it. All the elements which compose human nature were represented in the contact of the Spirit of God with the peoples of the Roman Empire. And so that contact with its consequences may be regarded as typical of later contacts with their consequences. Indeed the first contact exhibited on its human side more complexity and variation than any which succeeded it down to this age, when East and West brought face to face bid fair to repeat on a larger field the history of the early centuries. Accordingly, if we can appraise the conditions which confronted the religion of Christ in the period of its external weakness and when it possessed no adventitious aids, conditions which may have hindered but certainly never halted its onward march, we have something available to explain its later successes, and also something to guide us in meeting a situation which though greater in bulk is no greater in difficulty than that with which apostles, martyrs, and apologists grappled in the first and second centuries of our era.

The power and majesty of Rome held together in a firm but external bond a most heterogeneous collection of races. But the races which counted, the races which contributed anything of moment to the life of the Empire may be easily distinguished from the rest, and it is these races

which were prominent in the contact with the vital force, and left the deepest impress upon the resultant. They were the Hebrew, the Hellenic, and the Latin races. The Teuton was on the fringe of the Empire and of civilization—the Celt of Britain or of Gaul was more, or less, an understudy of the Latin ; Spain was thoroughly Romanized ; Africa was Latin with a difference, which is interesting, but not sufficient to be regarded as separately typical. From Cyrene to the Euphrates the predominant influence was Greek ; other peoples were semi-barbaric and entirely local in their effectiveness. But throughout the Empire, stronger indeed numerically and influentially in the East, yet dispersed generally about the Mediterranean Basin, dwelt the Jews, a race of marked individuality whose rigid convictions and proud aloofness aroused general interest, and a degree of antagonism ; the Jew might be hated, and in a sense despised, but he could not be ignored. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—these were the three measures of meal.

One does not know how far Our Lord's similitude of the leaven was intended to be applied to the actual and almost immediate situation the Kingdom was about to face. The tendency to minimize and depreciate the significance of the Saviour's utterances in view of the fashionable theories of the day is no new phenomenon and should cause no panic.[1] Wellhausen, Schweitzer, and Drews are able and acute men of learning whose labours are entitled to respect, but anything like servile obeisance to them is to be strongly deprecated. The evidence is before us as it is before them, and no one outside of Germany is intellectually bound to the theory that the Universities of the Fatherland possess a monopoly of ability to arrive at just conclusions from the evidence.[2] Be that as it may, it appears to the writer

[1] Burkitt, *Gospel History and its Transmission*, pp. 194–9, as to the genuineness of the Parables and Sayings of Our Lord.

[2] Written A.D. 1917.

to be somewhat significant that Our Lord's similitude should represent exactly the course of the leavening process which was imminent. This is not a matter of fancy but of historical fact. The Hebrew race first felt the contact, and the influence spread through it to the Hellene and the Latin. Here, then, are the three elements in the ancient civilization which are to be reckoned with, which gave to it its character. Syrian and Phrygian, Copt and Berber, Gaul and Teuton present many interesting racial characteristics, but they leave no distinctive and widely spread impression upon the culture of the Empire unless indeed their contributions are made available by the acquisitive, moulding, and applying energy of one or other of these three great elements of the old Graeco-Roman world;[1] the Hebrew, the Hellene, and the Latin received of course much more than they contributed, but still they did contribute very much to the organic life of the dry meal which had been touched by the Spirit of God.

It will, however, be necessary to limit the subject even further in an endeavour to bring about an adequate treat-

[1] e. g. the Mystery Cults of Hellas are supposed by many to be of Asiatic origin. Yet they flourished on Greek soil. They were intellectualized and perhaps spiritualized by Hellenic genius, and, thus transformed, to some extent satisfied the yearning of the Greek soul which was left cold and unimpressed by the native deities of official civic worship.

The worship of Isis became fashionable in Caesarian Rome, and exercised a great influence—not altogether a wholesome one—within certain restricted limits.

Had these rites and the religious ideas connected with them remained on their native soil (Phrygia, Egypt, &c.) they would have been uninfluential, but their assimilation by the representative races (as mentioned in the text) caused them to be widely effective. One of the most flourishing of these cults, that of Mithra, came originally from Persia, but spread with astonishing rapidity through the Empire, appealing particularly to the military classes. Both theologically and morally it was one of the most respectable of the rivals of Christianity.

ment of it. Let us mark the influence of the Hebrew so far as it is clearly defined and distinguishable. As a vigorous and self-assertive element in the Church it is conspicuous in the first century, rapidly waning towards its close. It will, perhaps, be helpful to discuss this predominance and the subsequent decline of Hebraism to the vanishing-point,[1] and to close this part of the subject with some comments upon the permanent contribution of the Hebrew to the Church of Christ, a contribution which is quite apart from and above, in its effectiveness and in its spiritual beauty immeasurably above, his temporary activity as an ecclesiastical political force.

The influence of the Hellene was a growing one and a complex one; from the second generation of Christianity it extended on to the period of the Western Empire's collapse; afterwards it more and more restricted itself to the surviving, and more thoroughly Hellenized portion of the Empire, and ceased to exert a living influence upon the vigorous West which had been regenerated by new blood from beyond the Danube and the Rhine. Since then the Orthodox Church has remained practically as it was in the sixth century, active enough in the realm of missionary effort, and in the maintenance of a conservative form of Christianity, but no longer rich in speculative thought, and standing aloof from the general life of Christendom. Even so, the subject is far too large for one poorly equipped student to essay, and on this ground I voluntarily confine myself to the period marked, let us say, by St. Ignatius on one side and by St. Athanasius on the other. When the latter personage is reached Hellenic influence has claimed its own lofty place in Christian life and thought, and further Hellenic progress is to be expected and cannot be stayed. Moreover, from that period also the causes of

[1] i. e. as a distinctive factor in the life of the Church.

the impending cessation of living Hellenic influence can be estimated.

The last great factor is then to be considered. In some respects it is the most impressive of them all. Certainly the Latin influence is more clearly marked than that of the other two. It is that of the three which contributes most to the visibility of the religion of Christ. It is an influence exerted along practical lines ; an influence devoted to the problems of organization and discipline. The relations of the individual Christian to the community—the relations of various Christian communities to one another—the seat of authority in Christ's Church Militant here in earth, these are the pre-occupations of the Latin element. Not exclusively so, of course, but so predominant that they may be said to be characteristic of its genius. For obvious reasons it is what we should expect. The Jew had his ideas of law and order, but they were narrow and rigid ; the Greek felt the need of co-ordination and subordination, but his interests were elsewhere, and whatever practical instincts he possessed were in favour of loose rather than tight administration. But the Roman possessed a genius for government which manifested itself in steering a middle course between rigidity and slackness, in adapting means to ends, in constructing a huge and majestic edifice which abides till this day, albeit with its outer courts in ruins and its masonry scarred and disfigured, yet still commanding the loving devotion of multitudes, and the admiration, in some respects grudging, of all Christendom.

While the effect of the vitalizing force upon Hebrew, Hellene, and Latin cannot be gainsaid even by those who minimize and depreciate it, that effect reaches down to our own day and spreads over a far larger portion of the earth's surface than in the period of its most conspicuous success in the first three centuries ; nevertheless the

influence of the material upon the compound is also very great and worthy of careful observation. Had the material been less rigid, or less volatile, or less heavy in any of its three divisions, how different would have been the history of the Christian religion! On the other hand, if any of these three factors had opposed more instead of less of these resistant qualities, the result would again be different. The compound is certain to be modified by the material of which it is formed. The vital force can give life to the harshest material, as it gives life to the sweetest and most assimilative, but it will be a different kind of life. The bread which is produced by leaven brought into contact with the finest wheat flour is most dissimilar from that produced by a contact of the same with rye. Both may be good of their kind, but they are different. Both may be bad of their kind, the result of poor quality and unskilful handling, but they are bad each in its own way.

However, it is waste of time to discuss what might have happened when we are seeking to find out what did happen. What did happen is this: the Christian Church underwent a remarkable development, and a decided modification, from her close contact with the ancient civilization, though all the time she was engaged in deadly war with it, and was destined to survive it. She absorbed from the society around her much of current thought and common custom. Indeed, a great deal which is derived from her early environment clings to her still, and may ever do so. The training and discipline of life are secondary only to the life itself. And the Spirit of God dwells in the Church not to destroy its human element, but to sanctify it. In accordance with this principle the Church absorbed from Judaism the racial reverence for holy things, its view of the sacredness of the Old Testament, some valuable ideas as to the conduct of worship, sacerdotal as connected with the Temple, ministerial as associated with the Synagogue;

and above all a consciousness of sin, a craving for reconciliation with a Holy God which, although it is shared in by all races and all individuals who possess religious instincts, was a marked characteristic of the Hebrew. Likewise Greek philosophy seized upon the simple Christian faith and created a theology. This is of course by no means the only Hellenic contribution, but it is the most conspicuous one. Finally the Imperial polity and the Roman genius for government became the pattern, and supplied the practical talents, for the development of ecclesiastical organization.

Whether these and other results of contact with the world of the early generations of Christian history are to be deprecated, or the reverse, is a subject of much interest, and offers scope for a wide divergence of opinion. For the present it may suffice to say that they occurred, that they were in some measure inevitable. As regards the results specifically referred to above, I think it is safe to say that they were indispensable to the progress of the Church, and perhaps, humanly speaking, to her continued existence. It was necessary that a certain disposition of the heart should be exhibited by the Christian community towards the Holy Father who had outpoured the treasures of his love upon mankind. To Christians of the present day it should be a matter of devout thankfulness that the Hebrew with his natural capacity for religion was at hand to supply it. It was impossible that a Revelation should be given and that men should not reflect upon its contents—that the holy mysteries should be exhibited and men refrain from speculation. We may be thankful also that the race of the most acute mental powers which the world has ever known devoted its energies to thinking out the faith. Furthermore, since the Christian religion was concerned not only in developing spiritual intuitions, and quickening intellectual life, but in shaping conduct and in moulding

character ; since she was engaged in teaching men how to live as individual members of One Body, we may rejoice that the Latin was privileged, above all others, to contribute the gift of order, and evolve a system of discipline based on practical common sense.

Had the Hebrew influence remained paramount in the Christian Church, it may be fairly conjectured that it would never have risen to its Catholic destiny. Those Christian communities which clung faithfully to Jewish traditions contributed least to the common treasure of the Church, and dwindled gradually from obscurity into extinction. Had the Hellenic influence completely overwhelmed the others,[1] the Church might have drifted into abstract speculation, lost its spiritual energy and its moral vigour, exerted a waning control upon the degenerating populations of the Empire, and finally sunk altogether beneath the weight of the virile nations of the North. Certainly the vital force would have retained its power, but within painfully restricted lines and hindered by the barriers of culture and civilization from leavening the whole lump. On the other hand it is easy to appreciate

[1] There was a considerable Greek population in Rome itself, and the Church of the Imperial City remained Greek-speaking for several generations. It was, however, only when it became preponderatingly Latin that it began in any decided way to exhibit its peculiar characteristics and exert its peculiar influence. In Sicily, Southern Italy, and along the Rhone Valley, Hellenic elements must have affected the Church, but only temporarily. Elsewhere in the West Greek influence was negligible.

The Jew also was numerically important in every city of large population, but Semitic influences were never strong in the West. When the Jew was converted he became absorbed in the Gentile Christian community. It is only in the East that the Jewish influence is impressive, and even there in a diminishing degree.

(In regard to Greek influence in Southern Gaul, see the interesting comments of Mommsen, *Provinces of the Rom. Emp.*, vol. i, cap. iii, pp. 78–9 ; and, for the Jew in the West, see ib., vol. ii, cap. xi, pp. 171–4.)

the effects of predominant Latinism. Western Europe has experienced them for centuries, and is still largely governed by them. Even the Teutonic and semi-Teutonic races which are formally separated from the Papal system are in great measure controlled by ideas and instincts which have become habitual, but which have been imposed upon them by the Latin genius which, deprived of its natural scope in the secular world, threw all its energies into the Church, and made the City of the Seven Hills the spiritual centre of Western Christendom, and claims both East and West. No doubt this was inevitable; the Latin element was the only one in the West which counted for much, the only one which united to the vital force could absorb and transform the rude barbaric material of the North and North-west. Probably the trans-Rhenane and trans-Danubian savage would have remained unaffected by Hellenic culture and Hebrew piety. The stern realism, the practicality, the stress upon conduct, the power of organization and discipline were doubtless the characteristics of the Church, as it presented itself to him, which appealed most strongly to Goth or Frank or Saxon. Certainly, child as he was in culture, secular and religious alike, it was a presentation of religion which was more effective than any other. But the writer feels strongly that Western Christianity, whether of the quasi-Teutonic or Roman type, will never produce its noblest fruits until it has submitted to association with materials of which the Hebraic and Hellenic are representative.[1] It is therefore a matter of profound thankfulness, in the writer's view, that among all the Christian communities of the

[1] Doubtless the abandonment by the Eastern Church of its policy of 'splendid isolation' (when it comes) will give to the rest of Christendom much of what it needs. This contingency may be nearer than most of us imagine. Hindustan evangelized and sanctified will also assuredly add to the glory of the Bride of Christ. Note written A.D. 1917.

West the Anglican Communion at least has made its appeal to an undivided Christendom where the three measures of meal have had in the past, and will have again in God's own time, freedom of interplay. The high hopes and Catholic instincts which this principle has kept alive and fostered have perhaps more than anything else prevented the Church of England, and those bodies in communion with her, from lapsing into self-centred provincialism.[1]

But of course it is the vital force, round which gathers all that is essential to the Church, which has secured for it continuous and expanding life. In other words, it is the Spirit of God controlling its energies and operations which has preserved the Church from absorbing more of the world elements than it could, at least ultimately, assimilate. It is to be observed, however, that the contact of the vital force with the various elements of humanity has produced disturbance and upheaval, that the contact of one human element with the other, when each has been affected by the vital force, also tends to unsettlement as long as the elements remain discordant. The vital force, of course, operates towards final concord, but in the meantime it is war. It has always been so : it is so now.

In accordance with this principle we find that all through her history the Christian Society has endured reactions. At every crisis there have arisen those who have affirmed that the *civitas Dei* is losing her original character and her pristine purity, and is in danger of becoming merely a phase of *civitas Mundi*. And these aspirations towards

[1] One hears much of Anglican insularity, but I do not think the charge is fairly or logically urged. The circumstances of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* are in some degree insular, but are less so than in the past, and this accidental insularity is diminishing with every generation ; its spirit and its mind are in the best sense Catholic. Of course there are narrow and provincial elements in every part of the Body of Christ.

purer life, doctrine, or polity, differing markedly from one another in aim have generally been conservative, opposed to the *Zeitgeist*, and looking back to the simpler, presumably purer, condition of former generations.[1] The Judaizers of St. Paul's day, the Montanists of the second century, the Arians of the fourth ; factionists, schismatics, heretics, were all more or less opposed to the principle of development and the catholicizing of the Church, endeavouring to delay her progress towards that consummation when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of God and His Christ.

Moreover, it is worthy of belief that these reactions are essential to the health of the spiritual Body, and that they are, at least in the present dispensation, part of the Divine Economy. Doubtless this would be included in the mind of Our Blessed Lord when he said : ' I came not to send peace [on earth], but a sword.' [2] The Church on earth is verily the Church Militant, and the *Contentio Veritatis* is not only with external enemies but with convinced opponents of the very household of faith. Nor must it be hastily assumed that the cause of truth is invariably and completely with the progressives : indeed the conservative determination to stand fast in the old paths and maintain historical convictions, and even prejudices, is often justified. Sometimes there is danger of marching too fast with the times ; sometimes there is danger of taking the wrong turning. Earnest and vigorous disputation, apart from the frequently attendant acerbities thereof, is a sound and wholesome phenomenon. It tends to the clarifying of ideas, the removing of misconceptions,

[1] Not of course consciously hostile to the fulfilment of this destiny on the part of the Church, but at variance with the contemporary currents of thought and action supposedly moving in this direction, and objecting vigorously to the means and manner of the efforts made towards it.

[2] Matt. x. 34.

to the edification of the whole Society. The Spirit of the Lord is the Spirit of Liberty,[1] and where there is free discussion, Truth must ultimately prevail. In spite of the by-products of uncharitableness, malice, and personal bitterness too often engendered during the progress of a great religious controversy, the Body of Christ must ultimately gain in the jar of the various elements composing it. The stress and strain are symptoms of the leavening process, and it is well that there are elements in the mass which resist, for instance, over-complexity in theology, vagueness in religion, or laxity in morals. There is peril also of turning theology into philosophy, and religion into ceremonialism, and it is well there should be outspoken criticism and resistance.

Hence it comes about that the Holy Spirit has endowed the Church with a power of resistance to innovation both in the sphere of thought and practice. To some men He has given the power to stand apart from the general current of their day, and has entrusted them with the office of acting as a wholesome corrective to the world-tendencies in the Body of Christ. Through the witness of such men as Tertullian the Church is purer and sounder than it would otherwise have been. The Puritan is essential to the health of the Church, he is most susceptible to the sterner monitions of the Spirit, he brings home to the conscience of contemporary churchmen standards of Christian conduct which were slipping from his grasp. So also the Novatianist and the Donatist did good service. However fanatical, ignorant, bigoted, and contentious such sectaries were, they called attention to the importance of discipline and high spirituality in the Christian Family. In the sphere of theological speculation even the execrated Arius was useful in helping the Church to maintain the analogy of the faith, and provided the occasion and the material

[1] Cf. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

for the construction of a cautious, well-weighed statement of doctrine which has become the Symbol of the Catholic Faith in all succeeding generations. At least we can be grateful to the Arian controversy for bringing forth Athanasius.

If the elements which are about to compose, or which compose, the Church were static, the problem would be much easier of solution. In that case we should be able to say, here are elements without life ; as soon as the vital force comes into touch with them and imparts to them its own character, the operation will be complete and definite : or, here are elements vitalized and transmuted by the vital force ; they have lost their old character of lifelessness and passivity, and have become vessels and transmitters charged with heavenly, spiritual vigour.

But the matter is not so simple. The human elements are not purely static. There is life and movement and fitful progress even in unregenerate mankind. On the other hand, there is a power of resistance, an innate stubbornness in human nature, presenting itself in different forms according to racial disposition—made more complex still where there is a blending of races—which retards the assimilating processes after the contact with the vital force has been effected.

Since these are the conditions of the problem the student is face to face with much that is baffling and much that is insoluble. A devotee of the exact sciences may always expect a definite result from his inquiries and his endeavours. A thing is, or is not : certain chemical forces fuse, or do not fuse. But human nature is variable and uncertain : on one side it is merely animal, on the other it reaches to the stars. This mingling of earth and heaven makes the study of man not only fascinating but extremely difficult, even though it should be assumed that the present state of humanity is a permanent one. But since man

possesses aspirations, and displays potentialities and furthermore believes that he is impelled by mighty spiritual forces external [1] to himself, the problem admits still less of an exact and mathematically satisfactory solution. For ' who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward ? ' [2] Yet the man with the spirit of the true historian, even while he is delving in the records of the past, is conscious of this great spiritual trend towards some far-off divine event, conscious also of a trend in the opposite direction, conscious in fact that he is in the presence of inexplicable mysteries which hinder him from reaching easy conclusions and save him from shallow dogmatism. He is content if he can establish principles, trace developments, and reach approximations. For the key of absolute knowledge is not in his hands—infallibility is not the possession of any son of man, though scientific observation has made him tolerably certain of himself within a restricted area of what is called the world of Nature. Therefore he is perforce content with relative truth in reference to these subjects of thought and investigation which lie between earth and heaven, of which man, considered individually, or in the mass, may be regarded as the type. That absolute knowledge of these and even higher mysteries will some day be vouchsafed to us there is every ground to hope.[3] Meanwhile, it is certainly profitable for us to exercise our minds and illuminate our spirits by such investigations. Indeed, as it is the Will of God that only those who strive after true knowledge [4] shall ever reach it, and since a study

[1] External until he has become impregnated with them. Convictions of the soul indicated above have ever been the possession of the higher spirits among men.

[2] Eccles. iii. 21.

[3] Serious efforts to reach it may be the conditions of its attainment.

[4] Not the γνῶσις of mere intellectual endeavour, but that which is sought through faith, and which is the reward of those who strive

like that of human history, especially when it deals with the subject in its spiritual aspects, may be regarded as contributing in a subordinate way to such a consummation, the writer trusts that Divine help may be extended to him to arrive at some tentative conclusions which will be suggestive and stimulating to others who may be enabled to carry on investigation towards a surer and safer anchorage.

after communion with God. *Εἴρηται γὰρ, τῷ ἔχοντι προστεθήσεται, τῇ μὲν πίστει ἡ γνῶσις, τῇ δὲ γνώσει ἡ ἀγάπη, τῇ ἀγάπῃ δὲ ἡ κληρονομία.* (*Cl. Alex. Strom.*, vii. 10.)

THREE MEASURES OF MEAL

PART I

THE FIRST MEASURE: THE HEBREW

CHAPTER I

THE RELIGIOUS GENIUS OF ISRAEL

For many generations the Hebrew race possessed a deep and vigorous, if restricted, spiritual life which was exalted by Promise and controlled by Law. That Promise was more a characteristic of this spiritual life than Law is, a fact which the thoughtful student of the Hebrew writings may gather for himself, but should he require confirmation of his belief he will find it in two letters of a late date. One is addressed to certain communities of Galatia in Asia Minor which had eagerly accepted the writer's teaching and then wavered from it : [1] the other is directed to a community in Rome which had adopted the general faith of the author but had not yet come into personal touch with him, at least collectively. It was this 'Hebrew of Hebrews' [2] who fastened upon the essential thing in Judaism and exhibited its relation to the richer, fuller faith he himself had come to profess.

Nevertheless, 'the Law is holy and the commandment holy and righteous and good'.[3] 'What then is the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should

[1] Cf. art., 'Region of Galatia', William Ramsay, *Dict. of Bible*, vol. ii, pp. 89–93.

[2] Phil. iii. 5 (R.V.).

[3] Rom. vii. 12 (R.V.).

come to whom the promise had been made.'[1] Here is stated for us in the texts directly quoted and in the references given below the character and function of the Jewish Law and its relation to the Promise.[2] Evidently it was the great safeguard of the potential recipient of the Promise. It preserved the race of Promise from the contaminating influences of peoples of a higher material civilization but of lower morality and of inferior religion. It is idle to assert that Israel remained unaffected by the many nations with whom in the long course of her history she came in contact. The evidences of foreign influence are many and various, and cover her whole career. On the other hand her powers of resistance were very great indeed, and are to be attributed not only to the high hopes which were fostered, stimulated, and enlarged by a long succession of prophetic teachers, but to a complete system of enactments and ordinances which gave spiritual significance to the whole life of the people. Thus were the members of this ancient race taught that they belonged in a peculiar sense to their God. The observance of the Law became the distinctive mark of the Hebrew. Prophecy might wax and wane, or for long periods disappeared entirely, but the Law remained, and came to be regarded as fixed and unalterable down to its very minutiae. It also grew into a barrier upon which the Hebrew prided himself. And that which was manifestly founded to prevent the flow of contamination from one side was made an obstacle to prevent the flow of charity from the other. It is very sad, but very human.

That the seed of Abraham possessed this self-sufficiency (I use the term in its scientific and not in its popular and depreciatory sense) in the early stages of its history cannot

[1] Gal. iii. 19 (R.V.).

[2] The reader is referred to Rom. i. 18–v. 21, and the main section of Galatians (iii–v. 1).

be maintained. It was clearly a gradual growth. We are not here concerned with questions of literary or historical criticism, but I believe that scholars of all schools would unite in agreeing that the Israelitish race was brought as a whole very gradually to the attitude of exclusiveness which was so marked a feature in the beginning of the Christian era. Even as the spiritual leaders of the nation became conscious of the necessity of maintaining a separatist policy there were many and continual deflexions from it on the part of kings, courtiers, intellectuals, and secularists generally. And the spiritual leaders, while full of warning as to the dangers of moral pollution and the degeneration of faith, occasioned by mingling with the heathen and learning their works, yet have their prophetic vision filled with the glory of the time when the danger shall be removed and the barrier be no longer needed, a time when even the beasts of the field shall lay aside their internecine warfare and dwell peacefully together in the Messianic kingdom. The more rigid exclusiveness was, I believe, a post-exilic product, and has been on the whole the prevailing attitude of orthodox Judaism from the time of Ezra until the present day.[1]

But the spiritual powers and gifts which sprang from the Promise, and lay conserved within the barriers of the Law as in a reservoir, gave to Judaism its vitality and meaning, and perennially freshened and purified it, until Promise issued forth in Fulfilment, and the reservoir of Jewish legalism was no longer necessary.

When we ask ourselves how it came about that a single race, and that by no means a great or influential one, attained such a high spiritual standard and such moral fixity, there can be no answer thoroughly satisfying unless we accept the solution offered by the people themselves,

[1] Ottley, *History of Hebrews*, p. 246. For connexion with legalism, see Oesterley, *Books of the Apocrypha*, pp. 121–3 and 262–6.

developed and expounded in their sacred writings, that it was revealed to them by their God. The scientific historical treatment of the records of ancient races leads us to expect in the literary remains of the Hebrews a certain child-like simplicity of thought and expression, some chronological looseness, freedom of scruples in regard to authorship, and above all a habit of clothing great, mysterious, and spiritual conceptions of things in vivid, concrete language. And we find them. But such characteristics do not invalidate these records; they simply testify that they belong to a primitive age. From an historical point of view they enhance their value; from a literary, they tend to make them a more fascinating study. And in the case of the Hebrew people the wonderful unity of purpose and aim underlying the great variety of their sacred literature, which in composition and collection extends over many centuries,[1] points to a single source of revelation. Not anywhere else in ancient or modern times do we find the claim to be the record of the Will and Purpose of God more solemnly and consistently set forth than in these writings. Quite apart from problems of authenticity and chronology it seems impossible to doubt the genuineness of these sacred words —that is to doubt their transparent sincerity, their noble and intense faith. This is exhibited alike in simple narrative, in impassioned oratory, and in the devout outpouring of the Hebrew lyric. Such a literature stands by itself, and to many candid minds of the highest intellectual order, the creative power, the spiritual force, the impression of profound veracity which it induces in the reader, are to be accounted for only on one hypothesis, which is, that the writings convey, through human media it is true, but still convey, a revelation from God.

But for my purpose it is not necessary to claim even so

[1] Westcott, *Bible in the Church*, introd.; also Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 226–53.

much as this. It is generally conceded that by some means or other the Hebrew race had acquired in its long and eventful history a set of religious ideas which in vigour, intensity, and definiteness surpassed the ideas of a similar kind among neighbouring peoples. Furthermore these religious ideas were not diffused over a number of objects but converged, or rather were concentrated upon, One Object. For other races, every high hill, every fountain, every grove held its own divinity; for the Hebrew, the works of creation, hill, grove, and fountain, the great sea, and the starry firmament proclaimed, not a multitude of divinities, but one God. Nor was this God worshipped merely as the Creator, the Governor, the presiding genius of natural phenomena, but as the Director, Shepherd, and Judge of the souls of men. He spoke not only in the forces of the material universe but in the still small Voice which was appropriate to influence the spirit and conscience of man. The Hebrew conception of God was, therefore, that He was a Moral Being, as well as a Being of Might. Not merely was he a God of thunder and earthquake to be propitiated as the source of physical discomfort and calamity, but as the proper Object of sacrifice and prayer since he was a Good God, a Just God, a God who sought His Will to be obeyed, not in an arbitrary way, but according to the principle of His Being. As a Righteous God, He exacted righteousness from His servants.

In addition to these ideas of God as being Mighty, Wise, and Holy (for Wisdom is comprehended among the attributes of Him Who creates, orders, and controls the universe, and Holiness in Him Who moves the spirit of man to righteousness and punishes them for wrong-doing) there is the conception of God as being Loving. Time and again the Fatherhood, and, issuing therefrom, the loving-kindness of Yahweh are described. This Fatherhood is, however, generally limited and circumscribed to Yahweh's

dealings with His Chosen People. But the idea of God blessing all the nations of the earth occurs very early in the sacred records, and whatever the time of the compilation of these documents, its position in the accounts of patriarchal life shows that such a catholic conception was regarded as rather fundamental, standing as it does among the basic promises of a great and noble destiny for the Seed of Abraham.

At the stage in history when Jesus of Nazareth appeared, Israel was the typical monotheistic race—indeed the sole monotheistic race. Apparently there had been much sympathy between the Persian and the Hebrew in the days of their association.[1] And it has been contended that Judaism incorporated many Persian conceptions into their religion. This may be so, but it is certain that this influence did not extend to fundamentals. The religion of Persia was profoundly dualistic.[2] It is the root idea of the system of Zarathustra. The Hebrew religion is, on the other hand, monotheistic, and while the problem of evil disturbed the sages and saints of Israel, as it has ever disturbed the reflections of thinking men, the Dualism of their Persian masters was never accepted as a solution, though the speculations of the Orient probably attracted them and helped to develop their conceptions of the powers of darkness and the reality of the Unseen Adversary. But the Hebrew strength lay not in speculation but in intuition. On grounds beyond reason they had accepted Yahweh. Speculation upon the facts which they believed to have

[1] The enthusiasm of deutero-Isaiah in reference to the great deliverer, Cyrus, seems on the whole justified by subsequent events. The Persians were the most humane and most sympathetic of all Israel's Gentile rulers. See Isa. xl–xlviii, esp. xliv. 28–xlv. 7; also Driver, *Introduct. Lit. O. T.*, pp. 230–3 (8th edition).

[2] See art. 'Zoroaster' (Geldner), *Encyc. Brit.*, vol. xxiv, pp. 820 ff. (9th edition). For a modification of this view, see Mozley, *The Divine Aspect of History*, pp. 82 ff.

been revealed to them was an after-thought, and a comparatively late development, and when speculation arrived it was kept strictly within monotheistic limits.

So there was no other monotheistic nation in the age with which we are dealing. There were indeed individual thinkers and philosophers among the Gentile races who had reached a speculative conclusion that behind all changing phenomena there was One Original Essence, or Sublime First Principle of things. Yet the Hebrews were the only people among whom a belief in one God was at once so intense and so universally accepted; so much of a religion, so little of a theory. With them indeed it was really a passion. It was interwoven with their love of race, with all their hopes and yearnings. Their past glories were associated with Yahweh; their miseries and national degradation were the direct outcome of disobedience to Him. When the heroism of Maccabee,[1] the statecraft of Asmonean,[2] secured for them some measure of independence and some national revival, it was the favour of God again visiting His people.[3] When later on petty tyrants of the Herodian type, or venal Roman Procurators, pressed sore upon them, it was felt that Yahweh would yet show His Face, would yet justify His Chosen before the cruel, scoffing world, and the mysterious Figure foreshadowed by prophet and by psalm would yet come to lead the sons of Israel to victory, to triumph, and to peace.

Monotheism was, then, the leading characteristic of the Jewish people at the period which is of chief importance to the subject in hand. It was the fountain-head of their

[1] Cf. esp. 1 Macc. iii. 1–9.

[2] As exemplified by John Hyrcanus (130 B.C.). The name Asmonean is equivalent to Maccabean, but used generally to describe the family in its dynastic (and later) stage; cf. also Fairweather, *Background of the Gospels*, pp. 140 ff.

[3] The rigorists, however, regarded the political ambitions of the Asmoneans with suspicion.

virtues, and the struggle to maintain it was also the cause of their defeats since a tenacious absorption in one great idea, even the greatest of all, develops an ill balanced and one-sided nature; especially is this the case when the great idea is imperfectly apprehended, misinterpreted, or misapplied. The utterances of the prophets were full of power, full of insight, full of moral and spiritual glow, but fitful and fragmentary. They stimulated and suggested, but it was not their part to interpret or apply. The result of the prophetic dispensation was that it left the Hebrew people with a firm and unshakable confidence in the One God, but with many of the connotations undiscovered which such a faith implies. When the days of prophetic leadership were gone and there was no longer any open vision, the task of interpretation and application fell into the hands of men who were partially unfitted for these functions. It was not that they lacked piety or intelligence; they lacked the spiritual penetration to gauge the sense of spiritual declarations. It seems a pity that the seed to whom the promises were made failed to realize their full meaning, or their bearing. But looking backward we can see that it was better so; we can 'justify the ways of God to men'.[1] For suppose the Jewish race as a whole had been responsive in the day of fulfilment, Jesus of Nazareth would have been a national hero, and Christianity a racial religion. To make Christ acceptable to the world, He is rejected of His own; to make the Church of Christ Catholic, it is cut off from its source.

Another marked feature of the Hebrew race was its reverence for the writings in which its knowledge of Yahweh was enshrined. Other peoples had their sacred literature. The Epics of the Heroic Age were in a sense, what they have been often called, the Bible of the Hellenes, but it can, I think, be reasonably inferred that the cultivated

[1] Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Prologue (Bk. I).

Athenian of the period of Pericles would solemnly quote the Homeric poems with his tongue in his cheek so far as their moral and spiritual lessons were concerned, and surely felt no reverence for gods and goddesses whose gallantries rivalled those of the loose livers of his own time.[1] The philosophers quarrelled seriously with the ethics of the popular religion which found its basis in early Greek poetry.[2] Part of the charge against Socrates was that he was an atheist:[3] this means that he sought a firmer ground for morality than that which the normal polytheism supplied. Even Plato found it impossible to make edifying use of the sacred literature of his race except by allegorizing it,[4] a method of interpretation which grew in popularity until the Neo-Platonist reduced the whole of the ancient mythology to mere abstraction and nothingness.

We know nothing at first hand of the Etruscans. We can only gather from the many allusions in Livy, Cicero, and other Roman authors that they were a very religious race, that is, greatly devoted at least to the ceremonies of religion, which is not quite the same thing. It is, however, very probable that there was once a considerable sacred literature which has since perished.

The holy writings of Rome were few. In the early stages of their development the Latin States clung to the superior religiosity of their neighbours across the Tiber. But the most highly prized of all the sacred records of the Romans were their Sibylline Books, and these were of Hellenic, not of Italian, origin. Yet nowhere else so much as at Rome was religion the handmaid of the State, and in the early centuries of its existence all the machinery of religion was jealously guarded in the interests of the Patricians and

[1] See Mahaffy, *Social Life*, esp. cap. xii. pp. 348–84.
[2] See Adam, *The Religious Teachers of Greece*, esp. Lect. I, pp. 1–20.
[3] Xenophon, *Mem.*, Bk. I, i and iii; Plato, *Phaedo*.
[4] Plato, *Phaedo*, 63 E, 81 A, 107 C.

employed to overawe the vulgar. An example of the usual procedure, and the reason for it, is succinctly given by the historian Livy: 'In primis foedera ac leges . . . conquiri quae comparerent iusserunt; alia ex eis edita etiam in vulgus; quae autem ad sacra pertinebant, a pontificibus maxime, ut religione obstrictos haberent multitudinis animos, suppressa.'[1] How bitterly the Patricians regarded the straining of Plebeians after civic dignities is admirably illustrated in the speech the historian puts into the mouth of Appius Claudius.[2] It was not merely an insult to the nobles; it was an impiety, a sacrilege. A religion with its scanty literature which was chiefly an engine of self-interest, a tool of party, could not maintain a deep hold upon its ministrants, and Cicero tells a story of the augurs winking at one another as they proceeded to perform the appointed ceremonies.[3] So it did not even blind the ecclesiastical agents directly engaged, as is sometimes the case. There was, however, a considerable amount of religious instinct and moral seriousness in the ancient Latin, but it was largely independent of any sacred literature or official cult.[4]

But with the Hebrew, religion was one whole. Rites, oral teaching, the written word were all expressions of the same faith, the same hope, the same devotion to the Living God. As time went on and the people were separated from their Temple, later yet, when even the inspired voice of prophecy seemed stilled, more and more were the feelings of reverence concentrated upon the records of Revelation. And modern Judaism is pre-eminently the religion of the Book, the sacred writings of the Old Testament.

But the monotheism of the Jew was so intense a force

[1] Livy, Bk. VI, 1.

[2] 'Virum imbutum iam ab iuventa certaminibus plebeiis', Bk. V, 2; also 3–7.

[3] The passage is in my memory but I cannot locate it.

[4] The subject is treated in greater fulness in Part III.

that it affected him in every relation of his life. His very environment tended to become holy because, now here, now there, he was conscious of Yahweh's Governance of His People. Thus a true son of Israel manifests a passionate reverence for holy things, and holy places, for everything associated with the worship of his God. This is not unique ; most races and most religious cults possess it in some degree ; but in the Hebrew we find it in its most highly developed form. And in his case the emotion is in an ascending scale, mounting up towards the One Great Object of the national faith. The land of Palestine was loved by the Jew of the most remote community of the Dispersion, and loved not merely because it was the land of his birth, or of his extraction, but because it was holy ground and contained within its borders the Holy City. The Holy City, or Mount Zion, was the glory of the native of Palestine and of the exile alike, since there it pleased Yahweh to dwell ; and the Holy City was hallowed by the Temple itself, the centre of monotheistic worship, within whose courts lay enshrined, or once had lain there, the most cherished treasures of pure religion, and where in happier days the light of God's Own Presence had shone between the stooping figures of the Cherubim upon the Ark of the Covenant. No doubt the still greater calamities the Jewish race was about to undergo, casting their shadows before, prepared them to seek other means of maintaining racial and religious individuality than those of place. Since the Temple was to be destroyed, to concentrate upon the synagogue ; since the holy ground of Palestine was irretrievably in the hands of the Gentiles, to substitute loyalty to race for loyalty to place. Nevertheless the feeling springs up from time to time from the inner consciousness of the people with wonderful intensity, especially at periods when the turmoil of international politics and the warring of the Gentiles suggest the slightest possibility

of restoration to the Vale of Jordan and the Highlands of Judea. Of recent years the Zionist Movement has acquired impetus, and the British Protectorate of Palestine has increased the yearning of the Hebrew for the waste places of his native land.

But it was the consciousness of sin which, involved in monotheism and derived from it, stamped the Hebrews as a peculiar people. All races have it in some degree and all individuals possess it, at least potentially. Where the religion is polytheistic it is apt to be confused and contradictory. What is unpleasing to one god is perhaps gratifying, or at least indifferent to, another. It is hard for a man to satisfy all his masters, and so he is sometimes willing to play off one against the other; or to rest in the idea that the gods only exact a formal and ceremonious homage. If they wish anything further let them speak. If they do speak by thunder, or earthquake, or pestilence, they can be appeased by holocaust and sacrifice, either human or bestial. It is rare for polytheistic religions to attribute moral principles to their gods, or to suppose them careful of the ethical standards of their worshippers. The teachings of many of the Greek philosophers and of the Vedic literature may at first sight seem at variance with this declaration. Yet the philosophers of Hellas, however much they clothe their ideas in terms of the current mythology and render lip-service to the popular gods, essentially represent a revolt from them;[1] the Vedic writings, on the other hand, contain suggestions of a primitive monotheism,[2] which at the time of their composition was in its decline, working its way down through Pantheism towards the welter of present-day popular Hinduism. Possibly also the early Roman religion contained ethical elements, but it is difficult to be sure of

[1] Treated more fully in Part II.

[2] Monier Williams, *Hinduism*, pp. 22–31.

this, for the Roman literature which has survived is of a comparatively late age, and its authors betray the tendency, a very common and pardonable one, of reading into the narratives of the remote past the sentiments and conceptions upon which they themselves have been nourished.

Thus I think it may safely be said that it was left to monotheism, and to Hebrew monotheism, to present to the world an intense and profound consciousness of sin. Whatever sense of sin was possessed among the other races of antiquity, the effects of such realization were in the main ephemeral and superficial; but with the Hebrew they were both deeply rooted and far-reaching. They influenced not only isolated actions but conduct as a whole, and therefore character, in a manner most unusual. In no other literature is there displayed such self-abasement, such contrition, such desire for national and personal expiation, such craving for reconciliation as is manifested in the Hebrew writings by the national, or individual, sinner before the offended righteousness of Yahweh. Nor is this an occasional phenomenon; it is a permanent characteristic. It is to be observed in historical narrative, in prophetical exhortations, in the lyric outpourings of the Psalmist. The Wise Men of the Hagiographa feel the burden of sin and see no way of escape; the Apocalyptist feels it, and sees relief in the Messianic Kingdom of God. Sin, national and social; sin, personal and internal. This is the strong undertone of Hebrew literature, and it grows in strength and volume as the People of God lose one, and then another, of the glories which belong to, and are valued by, the nations of the earth.

So this is the mark of all Hebrew literature. Next to its monotheism, the consciousness of sin stands supreme. In the narrative portions it is manifested sometimes in a naïve and child-like fashion; in the legal and ceremonial

writings, the enactments seem chiefly concerned with external and formal cleanness and uncleanness. Now it is indubitable that the narrative portions, however late their final redaction, contain very many primitive elements, and that the work of the editors has left much of this freshness and simplicity intact, and presents to us the religious conceptions of a very early age. So also the legalistic writings, though their present forms may be comparatively late, are the final recension of codes which in germ stretch back to the infancy of the race and perhaps even to a common Semitic type of religion.[1] And as it is difficult to discount the inherent monotheism of this body of writings, so is it difficult to dispense with its morality—a morality which in its essence is in the true line of development with that, say, of deutero-Isaiah, though naturally at a lower level. The morality in its earlier stages is based upon the same underlying conception as in its latest. And that conception is that God is righteous, and exacts righteousness from those who serve him. The conception of God being intensely vivid and personal, the consciousness of God's Character and God's claims has made the Hebrew intensely conscious of his own impurity and moral imperfection. Everywhere we note this moral sensitiveness and this wonderful humility in the Presence of the perfectly Pure and Holy Object of devotion. Even do we note it in the least spiritual and most formal of Old Testament compositions. Narrative and ordinance alike conduct us into a religious atmosphere where God is not only great and wise but also Holy; where man feels himself hopelessly inadequate, but where he strives to fit himself for communion with this ineffably Holy Being.

During the period of great spiritual activity the prophets were the progressives of the national theocracy. And

[1] e. g. the code of Hammurabi; see Lock, *Bible and Christian Life*, pp. 1–19.

while it was the part of the priesthood to maintain the sacrificial system, and with extreme care to observe the minutiae of worship so as to hand on to succeeding generations the normal apparatus of Israel's access to Yahweh, it was the function of the prophets to be the inspirers and guides of the people. The prophet was often the pioneer blazing out the trail towards fresh regions of spiritual truth. It would be wrong, however, to assume that he had no regard for the glories of the past, nor for the great things God had done in the days of his fathers and in the old time before him. The warnings and exhortations of the prophets are often expressed in terms of the past, and the established order of religious life and worship is generally respected. There is no settled and constant antipathy, or even antithesis, between prophet and priest, or between their several offices ; their function was different, that is all. ' The activity of the priests was very much more circumscribed than that of the prophets.' [1] The priesthood was the custodian of the idea of sacrifice, and thus, in conserving this idea through the ages from the remote past, it performed an anticipatory and prophetic office as well.[2] Sometimes the prophet compares ethical and ceremonial religious conduct, and, as we should expect, places the former on a higher level than the latter, but rarely does he discount the external forms of worship, or express any desire for their abolition. In fact, one of the charges which prophetic writers make is that the priests are unfaithful in their office and countenance abuses. But the prophets were before everything the messengers of a Righteous God, and understood their duty to be the inculcation of righteousness in the people and the main-

[1] Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 9 ; also *Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 20–1, 306–11.

[2] Cf. Epistle to Hebrews, where the prophetic aspect of Jewish rites is wonderfully revealed.

tenance of, or restoration of the people to, a proper relationship with God. And they ever seem to have realized that this relationship depended upon more than the perfunctory discharge of the external offices of religion. So early a representative of the prophets as Samuel is said to have declared, 'Obedience is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams'.[1] Indeed this statement may be said to reveal one of the root principles of prophetic endeavour. The idea recurs constantly among the literary prophets, for it is the allegiance of the heart which Yahweh claims. The mode and expression of this heart-fealty the prophets leave to the normal ecclesiastical agencies. Their business is to awaken and enlarge religious consciousness, not to derange the ordinary apparatus of religion. It is, therefore, no matter of surprise that when the recognized propaganda of the prophets ceased we find the People of God more intensely devoted to the forms of their religion than they were before. We have only to compare the condition of Israel in the days of the Judges with its condition in the post-exilic period to see what an immense ethical advance has been made, and yet this ethical progress has not weakened; rather has it strengthened, the hold of ceremonial religion upon the people. This twofold phenomenon I hold to be the result of the teaching of the 'holy men of God who spake as they were moved'.[2] The effects of prophetic doctrine are to be seen in (1) the higher conceptions of the God, Whom they worshipped *through the consecrated channels*, accepted generally by the people, (2) a deepened spiritual sense, (3) a fuller realization of their dependence upon God, (4) a consciousness of their own frailty and instability.

But it is not to be supposed that these effects were to be obtained merely by an appeal to the past. To the prophet past and present possessed significance, but it was

[1] 1 Sam. xv. 22. [2] 2 Pet. i. 21.

the future towards which his eyes were directed and which gave *motif* to his exhortations, warnings, and encouragements. He was for ever looking forward. True, there was a glory of Israel in the past, but it was a mere rushlight to the glory that Yahweh had reserved for the faithful remnant of His people. It was the Great Hope which gave force and power to prophetic utterance and which so strongly influenced the people. This Hope was nowhere very definite, yet became more so as time went on, a hope of redemption and triumph. Sometimes it was involved with a human deliverer; sometimes associated with God alone. Now on a plane of lofty spiritual splendour; again strongly materialistic. Sometimes revelling in the prospects of sated vengeance upon God's enemies; sometimes embracing the Gentiles, the brute creation, the Universe, in the Reign of Peace and Love. But this consummation, however portrayed, was always reached through suffering and affliction bringing about repentance and consequent reconciliation with God.

Nowhere more than in the prophetical writings is the spiritual genius of Israel displayed. Here we observe a perfect passion for religion. As is natural with men of intense conviction (and such a true prophet must always be) their spiritual perception is keen; their devout imagination glows; they bare their souls before God; they strive to make themselves fit agents of His Great Purpose. Consequently when the message comes they proclaim it, as far as the matter in hand is concerned, with intense vigour and directness. 'While I was thus musing the fire kindled, and at the last I spake with my tongue.'[1] They are always clear as to Him for Whom they speak, and as to them to whom the message is to be delivered, their errors and their failings.

Yahweh, Who as religious consciousness develops is

[1] Ps. xxxix. 3; cf. also the more pointed application of Jer. xx. 9.

growingly recognized as God of Heaven and Earth, demands true fealty, true spiritual worship; and these people who are pledged to worship Him either offer Him a homage which they as willingly pay to the so-called gods of the nations; or else they worship Him by external acts while their hearts are far from Him. It is this perversion or mockery of Yahweh which rouses indignation and evokes a torrent of denunciation from the lips, and later from the pens, of the prophets. They are jealous for the Lord of Hosts.

And as the prophet sees with deeper, truer insight the attributes of God—His Majesty, His Holiness, His Wisdom, His Love—he also sees not merely the positive facts of perversion and formality in religion, but he notes them as surface symptoms of a deep-seated diseased condition in which he is sometimes willing enough to recognize his own participation. The classic instance of this frame of mind is of course that involved in the Vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, 'Then said I, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.' [1] Nevertheless this sense of unworthiness, induced by a vivid realization of the Divine Character on one side, and Israel's failure on the other, does not lead to despair. On the contrary it builds up hope, for Yahweh is unchanging and eternal, but sin may be washed away and man restored to the favour of God. And the prophetic imagination is projected into the far future (which seems to the prophet very near) where the invincible obstinacy and sinful ignorance of man will be done away, where God will be recognized in His Perfect Beauty. The descriptions of this remote future condition and time vary according to the genius, temperament, and circumstances of each individual prophet; they also vary

[1] Isa. vi. 5.

according to the occasion of the message of each prophet. Moreover they are all couched in the magnificently figurative language that seems to be the sole medium whereby the spiritual aspirations of humanity can be expressed. But they all convey under simile and metaphor an impression of triumphant peace due to the banishment of sin to which the prophets, one and all, apply themselves, labouring perhaps to remove some specific wrong; in one case the worship of a false god, in another some social or political corruption, in another a spirit of hopelessness in the face of difficulties and suffering. Always, however, there is a deep realization of the necessity for rooting out the whole body of sin before the Glory of the Lord of Hosts shall appear, and His people rejoice in the light thereof. Yahweh's own people, or at least a faithful remnant, shall enjoy this blessedness, and through them all the nations of the earth. Salvation is of the Jews.[1]

Involved in these eschatological conceptions were the Messianic elements in Hebrew literature, some of which have already been touched upon. The Hope of Israel was contained in a Messianic Kingdom and converged upon the person of the Lord's Anointed.[2] The Kingdom was to revive, and to surpass, the glories of the Davidic Kingdom; the King is generally suggested as of David's line and as greater than his progenitor, far greater. For were we to gather up all the notices of Him through Whom the purposes of God were to be finally consummated, we should find that they indicate a Person combining all the qualifications which could be desired in one who was to be the theocratic leader of the people.[3] Kingship, priestly authority, prophetic power; sympathy, suffering, sacrifice,

[1] John iv. 22 (A.V.).

[2] Isa. vii. 14–16; Mic. iv, v; also *Dict. of Bible* (Hastings), vol. iii, art. 'Messiah'.

[3] See A. B. Davidson, *Old Test. Prophecy*, cap. xviii.

submission to Yahweh's Will; majesty, triumph, peace —all these characteristics, and others as well, are present when the contributions of prophets, psalmists, and narrators are assembled together. That this is a legitimate proceeding is borne out by an examination of the writings themselves and of their various contributions taken separately. The whole literature is preparatory to, and a foreshadowing of, a far-off Divine Event; while the various contributions all indulge in the same Hope, though expressed differently. There is, of course, to the uninstructed a difficulty in reconciling the Glory and Wisdom of the Messianic child of Isaiah (I) with the Suffering Servant of Yahweh in Isaiah (II).[1] But there are no rational grounds for supposing that the same Person could not present both aspects.[2] One prophet saw the Messiah in one aspect; the other in another. As a matter of fact He united both and more besides. It is very probable that each prophet supposed that the Purposes of God were to be fulfilled in the near future, perhaps in connexion with a person looming up in his horizon. Messianic language is applied to the Gentile, Cyrus, whose career embraced certain Messianic features, e. g. being God's agent, and being the rescuer and deliverer of God's people. In these respects he may be regarded as typical of the Perfect Messiah. Certainly the Messianic Ideals were never regarded as being exhausted by the exploits of any (almost) contemporaneous figures.[3] Be that as it may, we know that the Hope of Israel was at its zenith when all the secular glory of the nation had departed, when its people were dispersed over the ancient world, when even the grandeur of its Temple was due to the

[1] Cf. Isa. vii. 14–16, ix. 6–7, and Isa. lii. 12–liii.

[2] Isa. xlv. 1, and see Wordsworth in loc.

[3] e. g. the child through whom deliverance is to be found and whose birth is imminent; Isa. vii. 14–16, and ix. 6–7 (as above).

calculated munificence of a semi-pagan prince.[1] Yet there were many devout souls 'waiting for the consolation of Israel' and 'looking for redemption in Jerusalem'.[2] A despised, and probably illiterate, Samaritan woman exclaimed confidently, 'I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ: when He is come He will tell us all things.'[3] Whence this tense looking forward, this confident expectation of a Deliverer and a King? Is it merely a phase of the elusive 'hope' that 'springs eternal in the human breast',[4] or is it based upon solemn and authoritative declarations which the consciousness of the people recognizes as yet to be fulfilled? Surely the latter, for it rests so definitely and expressly upon those declarations.[5] The career of John, the son of Zecharias, is a dramatic presentation of the Hope. The burden of his preaching together with his pathetic question, 'Art Thou He that should come?'[6] reveal the Old Testament and its assurances as the foundation of that Hope.

It was a true instinct which guided the Jewish Church to place the historical books of the Old Testament among the prophets. Not only were they largely concerned in recording the activities of the messengers of God—Samuel and Elijah, to mention no others—but from the religious point of view history is the record of God in action, of His Will working out His Purposes. Now it was the prophet's function to reveal that Will and to declare those Purposes. This was in large part done by the historical record itself. That record was prophetic in substance if not in form, and 'he who runs may read'. That

[1] Herod the Great (so called), Jos., *Antiquities*, Bk. XV, cap. xi.
[2] Luke ii. 25, 38. [3] John iv. 25.
[4] Pope, *Essay on Man*, i. 95; see also Pascal, *Thoughts*, cap. v, 2.
[5] Matt. ii. 4–6; Luke vii. 16–17, xxiv. 19–21; John i. 19–25, i. 45, vi. 14; Acts i. 6, ii. 16–21, xxvi. 6–7. These are a few among many citations which testify to a general expectancy.
[6] Matt. xi. 3; Luke vii. 19.

some of the later historical books, like Chronicles and Ezra, remain outside the prophetic division was probably due to their appearance after the idea of the contents of the division had become stereotyped. Accordingly they were placed among the Hagiographa. The same fate befell the wonderful Apocalyptic of the Book of Daniel. The third division of the Hebrew Canon is indeed a strange medley, but the variety of its contents can be easily accounted for on the ground of unwillingness to tamper with a classification regarded as fixed and established.

CHAPTER II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HEBREWS

To those who consider that the Hebrew Canon contains the last word of spiritual endeavour under the Old Dispensation, the centuries which follow its final utterances must present much difficulty. Did the Chosen Seed suddenly become sterile and remain immobile for generations? In the days of our fathers this was the commonly accepted view. For more than three centuries the faithful remnant of the People of God was in a state of spiritual mummification. It was a dry and barren stage in Hebrew history during which there was 'no open vision', no religious development, nothing but the crystallization, even petrifaction, of conceptions and ideas supplied during the spiritually creative period of the great prophets. A more catholic spirit, strengthened by data supplied by modern scholarship, has completely altered the view which I have just attempted to describe. Our attention is insistently drawn to the fact that the Christian Church, as a whole, has ever treated with reverence and respect a body of writings known as the Apocrypha, which was composed and collected, to give it its widest limits, between the time

of the Persian Supremacy and the Christian era. Thoughtful study has pronounced these writings to be, in varying degrees, of intrinsic value. Moreover other works of Jewish authorship have been discovered, or more fully recognized, belonging roughly to the same age and actually extending beyond it, which shed a flood of light upon contemporary events, conditions, and ideas, and, possessing some merit in themselves, also enable us to understand more clearly than ever before the environment in which Jesus accomplished His Mission, and from which the Christian Church issued on its age-long career. Most of this literature is apocalyptic in character, a small portion of it secured a foothold within the limits of the Apocrypha, but far the larger part of it remained outside, where it possessed no official recognition, but much popular influence.

Another of the formative influences upon Judaism was the Wisdom Literature. Perhaps there is no Hebraic survival of our own day more characteristic of the modern Jew than that which is the product of the spirit represented by the Book of Proverbs, or the Preacher. Alike in their frank worldliness and shrewd practical ethics (qualities which are on the surface, and which make them the commonplace books of many others besides the sons of Jacob), and in their genuine piety and acceptance of God's Will, they appeal to the modern Jew. There is no doubt a strain of mysticism, and even something which can trace its lineage back to apocalyptists and remoter prophets, in the ranks of twentieth-century Judaism, but it is not obtrusively apparent to the Gentile eye. It speaks volumes for the thoroughness of those centuries of religious training and for the developed religious tenacity of the race that, in spite of the withdrawal of spiritual creativeness—for which withdrawal Christianity was largely responsible—the Ancient People of God have maintained as their

standard the Law of their fathers, and as a *modus vivendi*, the pious, practical counsel of their early sages. With its hopes shattered, the day of its visitation past, with no established rallying-point, scattered, oppressed, and persecuted, the Hebrew race still clings to its ancient faith, buys and sells in the market-places of the world, and joins practical wisdom to a definite monotheism which cannot be shaken.

'The Wisdom Literature of the Jews which has come down to us comprises both canonical and uncanonical books; but the distinction may be ignored, for all the books which belong to this literature, though each has its particular characteristics, are clearly members of one family; they are all alike in possessing one outstanding and typical mark of differentiation from the rest of the Old Testament books, viz., in them religion has become philosophy.'[1] In other words, the teaching of these writings is outside the general current of ancient Hebrew thought. It marks a comparatively late stage in the mental history of the race, and, while the beginnings of the Wisdom Literature may have been in the prosperous and leisurely days of Solomon,[2] it reached its zenith and acquired its great influence many centuries later when the Hebrew people were no longer a political entity, when the springs of prophecy (popularly so called) were for one reason or another dried up, and the reflections and aspirations of thoughtful men were no longer national and exclusive, but personal and universal. As far as their experience went, these men fulfilled the Latin maxim, 'Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.'[3]

However, care must be taken, as we assert the distinctiveness of this type of writing, also to maintain its

[1] W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Books of the Apocrypha*, pp. 224–5.
[2] 1 Kings iv. 29–34; also Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 200–1.
[3] Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, Act 1.

adherence to the ground principles of the Hebrew faith. Unlike the speculations of Greek philosophy which were bounded by no dogmas, or axioms, except those that were self-imposed, the Hebrew sage was ever true to the fundamental conceptions of his religion. He felt that a large body of truth had been revealed; he could not, and furthermore had no desire to, question or tamper with it. But there was a large field of inquiry and interest which revelation had left untouched, wherein lay problems which demanded reflection and called for elucidation, problems of immense importance which bore upon the destiny of man, his relation to his fellow men, his relation to God. Not like the old historians and redactors of his race was the wise man intent upon tracing the course of national development under the providence of Yahweh, nor like the prophets burning to deliver a message which would keep his contemporaries true to the faith of their fathers, or enlarge their faith with further knowledge, or raise their hopes by visions of future glory. The Jewish philosopher was preoccupied with the problems of individual experience. He was interested in the higher levels of theology, but his fixed monotheism prevented any daring excursions into that rarefied atmosphere. Yet there is one very notable exception to this cautious reticence. I refer to the personification of the Wisdom of God. This matter will receive further consideration in its proper place. For the present it will suffice to say that the Hebrew sages enriched 'la haute théologie' in the very field where there was a possibility of growth and prepared the soil for new seed. Otherwise their limit was the application of principles to everyday life. Indeed their great discovery, mentioned just above, was in the interests of this very practical purpose. For Wisdom, which was, as it were, the Breath of God, had been transmitted in some degree to man, so that each individual had within his being

a criterion, a discriminating and judging faculty, which helped him to distinguish right from wrong, the profitable from the harmful. So from the days of King Solomon to those of Ben Sira the efforts of the sages had been concentrated upon the formulation of a system of ethics, or a science of moral philosophy,[1] based upon Hebrew monotheism, intended to guide the average individual through the difficulties of life, and find a working hypothesis for the great problems thereof. So much of its teaching, however, is prudential rather than ethical that it has won great popularity with the masses and received scant attention from the leading moral philosophers. Yet it should be remembered that to the Jewish mind prudence is but a portion of wisdom, and matters calling for sagacity and common sense, though on a lower level, require the exercise of the divinely implanted gift of wisdom not so intensely but much more frequently than do the mysteries of God and the ultimate destinies of man.

Moreover, with this Jewish tendency kept in mind, a study of the Wisdom Literature will show that prudential maxims occupy only their due share of attention. The Book of Job, the noblest specimen of its class, is engaged upon the great mystery of the undeserved affliction of the innocent righteous. True, it reaches no solution except the Oriental expedient of restoring twofold what had been taken away,[2] and to the Christian reader, and possibly to the Jewish writer, the reward of the righteous Job seems absurd, childish, and banal. Surely, it must have been inserted as a sort of makeshift conclusion; something which, while it would not, could not, satisfy the philosophic or ethical mind, would appease the vulgar. Of

[1] 'Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, together with the Apocryphal (*sic*) *Ecclesiasticus* and *Wisdom of Solomon* are often spoken of as the "Wisdom Literature" from their references to *Wisdom* or *Khochmah*' (Bennett and Adeney, Biblical Introduction, App. C, p. 472).

[2] Job xlii. 10, 12; cf. i. 3.

course there is no satisfactory solution of the problem which could have been presented under the Old Dispensation. But it is the strongest, most dramatic, and most striking setting-forth of the subject in any literature. It is one which occupied the attention of many a reflective Hebrew. The Psalms are full of it.[1] But there the prosperity of the wicked was generally assumed to be temporary, the affliction of the righteous a cloud that passeth soon away. The shortness of man's earthly existence, however, constituted a difficulty. Suggestions of a life beyond the grave are scanty and dubious, but the strength of tribal and racial loyalty, the descent of blood and tradition through succeeding generations, the deep-rooted inherited confidence that God had reserved a great future for the race, served in some measure to mitigate the lot of the sorely tried servant of Yahweh, and caused him still to hope, though the grave yawned upon him and Sheol received him. How sublime is the trust in God and the personal self-abnegation of the poet who said, 'Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, And Thy glory upon their children!'[2] But the Book of Job states the problem more thoroughly than any other writing of pre-Christian days, and contains intimations of immortality for which it is difficult to account except on the theory that they are a reaching forward, an anticipation of a further lifting of the Veil which shrouds the Purposes of God.[3]

Another remarkable writing which, according to the rather loose Rabbinic classification, is included among the prophetic books is the story of Jonah. It is, however,

[1] Pss. i, xv, xxxvii, xlix, lxxiii might with great appropriateness be classified as part of the Wisdom Literature.

[2] Ps. xc. 16 (R.V.).

[3] Job xix. 25–7 (R.V.), and Driver, *Introduction Lit. O. T.* (in loc.), p. 418.

See also, for an admirable rationale of the teaching of the book, Davidson, *Theology of O. T.*, pp. 466 ff.

not the substance of a prophet's preaching but the telling, with a purpose, of certain incidents in his career. To my mind it has much kinship in tone and spirit with the Wisdom Literature.[1] The Universality of the Fatherhood of God is most powerfully and yet most subtly set forth, and the indirectness of this presentation in the form of a narrative contributes very much to its effectiveness. It seems to me that the writing is the product of an advanced stage of literary and religious culture and of a reflective and philosophical spirit. It is true we see the same catholic-minded tendency breaking forth at intervals throughout the Old Testament in narrative, in psalm, in prophecy alike, but nowhere else do we see it as the theme of an entire writing, and nowhere else is the national instinct of privilege and prerogative treated in so cavalier a fashion, and the loving mercy of God towards man and creation so clearly understood and so boldly avowed. And in no other portion of the Old Testament literature would the Book of Jonah appear so much at home as among the Wisdom Books whose writers' eyes have from circumstances or times been diverted from hope of national glory to questions of personal import where man as man, and not man as a member of the Chosen Seed, stands before his Creator and has to make answer for himself.

As the Wisdom Literature in the form in which it has come down to us stands late in chronological order among the sacred and semi-sacred writings of the Hebrew people, so it exhibits the marks of its late origin both in style and subject-matter. Gone is the naïve and child-like spirit of the ancient chronicles; gone are the creative thoughts of the great prophets. We are not to expect in this atmosphere a bright illumination, a new revelation, rather the fixing and strengthening and applying of what has been

[1] Not, of course, in technique, nor in terminology.

acquired. And in only one case is this expectation at fault, one which I have already indicated—the hypostatization of Wisdom as apart from and yet entering into man, as semi-independent and yet issuing forth from God, as being with God not only in time but before time, as being the associate, and almost the Agent, of the Divine creative operations.[1] Much of this no doubt might be put down to the exuberant fancy of the writers, to Oriental imaginativeness, and not to be taken literally. But there is so much in Hebrew, Hellenistic, and Aramaic literature—all controlled by the same religious principles—of a similar kind that the phenomenon cannot be dismissed lightly and treated as of no significance. The main theme of the writers of the school under discussion is Wisdom considered in all its aspects, mundane and practical, moral and spiritual, and then it is considered as to its source, which is found to be God. In fact it is regarded as the chief attribute of God, and more than that, as something proceeding forth from Him and as breathing through all things which He had formed. To the Palestinian interpreters of the Law and the Prophets the emanation of the Divine Being which obtains first regard is *Memra*, the Word. This conception is treated in much the same way and credited with similar faculties and similar operations as the Wisdom of the Sages.[2]

When the authors who have come most under the influence of Greek thought begin to appear, of whom

[1] Job xxviii. 12–28; Prov. viii. 22–31; 'Wisd. of Sol.', vii. 25–7, viii. 3–5, ix. 4, 9–11, xviii. 15. This list of references is not exhaustive but representative.

[2] The Targums employ the term *Memra*. See art. 'Logos', Hastings, *Dict. of the Bible*; also Westcott, *Comm. on Gospel of St. John*, introduction, p. xvi. However, the idea represented by the term *Memra* is a familiar one in the Old Testament Scriptures—the Targumim established and extended the idea under the new term. See also Part II.

Philo is the most splendid example, the Logos conception is seen to unite and blend the ideas of *Memra* and the Divine Wisdom in One Thing or Person (it is not clear which), and this Logos creates and animates σύμπας ὁ κόσμος,[1] bridges the chasm between the Transcendent God and His Universe. And though the possibility of Incarnation is not developed, and perhaps would be entirely outside Philo's range of thought, and that of the early Alexandrian School of Hellenistic philosophy, nevertheless these speculations carried forward the metaphysical gropings of the Ancient World to the point where the next step would almost inevitably seem to be, 'The Word became Flesh and tabernacled among us.'[2]

Thus it may be said that in spite of a superficial appearance in some instances of mere worldly prudence and common sense, the Wisdom Literature performed a notable task in at least three ways: (1) by presenting the problem of undeserved pain and affliction frankly and unshrinkingly, though unable to suggest an adequate solution; (2) by cutting loose at least in part from national exclusiveness and proclaiming the Universal Fatherhood of God;[3] (3) by contributing to the development of the (Logos) doctrine which later on found its speculative expression in Philo and its justification and verification in St. John.

[1] Philo uses other names for the Universe, e. g. τὸ ὅλον. See Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, vol. i, Bk. III, cap. ii, pp. 267–313.

[2] John i. 14 (R.V. margin).

[3] This characteristic appears in other parts of the literature of the Hebrew people, notably in some of the prophets, but is more consistently maintained among 'the Wise Men'.

CHAPTER III

JEWISH APOCALYPTIC

But there were other products of Hebrew thought (whether written in Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic matters not) which helped to make the Jew of the first century of our era what he was. Until the last generation their writings had been either unknown or practically disregarded: now they are appreciated at their true worth, and there may even be danger that they will receive almost more attention than they intrinsically deserve. I refer to the Jewish Apocalyptic writings. Some portions of them are included in the Hebrew Canon, and such have always been accorded reverence as integral parts of God's Word though their characteristics are the same as those which have only deutero-canonical authority, or have none at all. Even in Ezekiel [1] and Isaiah (I) [2] there are pure examples of true apocalyptic, and a large section of the canonical book of Daniel is of the same type.[3] Indeed its apocalyptic is probably the norm, or model, of much which succeeds it. Moreover the collection of writings known as the Apocrypha contains one fine example of this class of writing—2 (i. e. 4) Ezra.

It is, however, among the non-canonical fragments of literature which have come down to us from 200 B. C.–A. D. 100, generally known as Pseudepigrapha, that we find the greatest number of Apocalyptic writings. There is also within the New Testament Canon the magnificent Apocalypse attributed to St. John which is one of the best examples of this kind of literature, and among non-

[1] As typical, see Ezek. x.

[2] As typical, see Isa. xxiv–xxvii. (This is now regarded as a late and pseudepigraphic addition to Isa. I.)

[3] Dan. vii–xii.

canonical Christian writings there are several which might be classified as apocalyptic. But the pseudepigraphical books contribute most of the material whereby we may judge of the character, scope, and influence of this type of literature.

The cause of the rise of pseudepigraphic methods has been variously explained, but nowhere, so far as I have seen, with complete satisfaction. Certainly there was no *literary dishonesty* about it. The sense of proprietorship which authors feel in regard to their own writings, and the immorality of abstracting therefrom, or adding thereto, are comparatively late, and typically Western, contributions to practical ethics. Rhapsodists and others played pranks with the poems of the Greek Heroic Age. Yet I can well imagine Sappho and Alcaeus, to say nothing of Anacreon,[1] having a strong sense of ownership in regard to the jewels of their thought and fancy. In the Periclean Age the highest point of Hellenic culture and literary self-consciousness was reached. Roman letters of the classical period were also strongly infected with the same spirit. But it was certainly very slow in affecting the instincts and habits of Oriental and semi-Oriental peoples, and literary conventions of the Western pattern had no influence over the type of mind which was capable of producing the Pseudepigrapha of Judaism. Canon Charles has perhaps accounted for the phenomenon in the best way by the following explanation: 'The anonymity or pseudonymity that characterized all the progressive writings in Judaism from the third century B. C. onwards, was . . . due to the absolute position the Law had won through the legislation of Ezra. Owing to his efforts and

[1] Yet Anacreon had many imitators who sailed under his colours, i. e. used his name unblushingly—so the literary conscience of those days could hardly have been Puritanic! (See Nettleship and Sandys, *Dict. of Class. Antiquities*, in loc.)

those of his successors it came to be an accepted dogma in Judaism that the Law was the complete and final Word of God, and so valid for all eternity. Such a conception of the Law made the renewal of prophecy impossible. If any real advances were to be made towards a higher theology, they could only be made in works of a pseudonymous character under the aegis of some great name in Israel earlier in time than that of Ezra.'[1] But even this solution does not explain, for instance, the Apocalypses of the Book of Daniel, which are now generally regarded as unauthentic and as belonging to the Maccabean Age. Their place in the Sacred Canon might, however, be accounted for somewhat in this fashion. The legalistic pressure upon the contents of Scripture which Ezra inaugurated only gradually made itself felt, and became operative upon certain portions of the Sacred Writings before it became operative upon them all.[2] In other words there was a gradual crystallization, beginning with the Law (the Torah), and extending thence to the whole body of writings, which were ultimately declared supremely sacred and canonical at Jabneh (Jamnia) about A. D. 100. It was perhaps early in this period of gradual crystallization that the Apocalyptic of Daniel and possibly certain portions of the prophets (Isaiah, Zechariah, &c.) won their place and retained it within the sacred limits.[3] Other writings which originated later were unsuccessful in forcing an entrance since the process of crystallization was more advanced. Certainly the action of Ezra and those who succeeded him must have had the effect, either of smothering the prophetic faculties, or else forcing them to present

[1] Charles, *Between the Old and New Testaments*, pp. 160–1. (See also pp. 36–45.)

[2] Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 71, 96, 123.

[3] Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets*, e. g. pp. 203, 491–3; Isa. xxiv–xxvii, pp. 442–78; Zech. ix–xiv.

themselves more or less disguised. Our fathers accepted the first alternative, and, for the period between Malachi and the preaching of John the Baptist, would consider the Psalmist's pathetic assertion appropriate:

There is no more any prophet:
Neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.[1]

Modern investigation has, however, revealed to us that the prophetic instincts and potentialities were very much alive during this period, though their expression was cramped, impaired, and transformed. From the time of Ezra onward no man could receive credence and have his mission recognized, speaking in his own person and as the mouthpiece of God. He was more likely to be heard (or read) if he delivered his message under the cover of some great name. And so he wrote as Daniel or Moses or Enoch, and proclaimed under their shadow what he conceived to be the Will of God for his own generation.[2]

It seems to have been during periods of national eclipse, and when the sense of failure was particularly keen, and the dangers of racial disintegration and absorption by Gentile and polytheistic peoples were very threatening that Apocalyptic literature was written and circulated.[3] The glory of Israel had departed but the aim of these devout authors was to carry on and repeat the assurances of the prophets in regard to a future beatific state. In doing so they expanded and developed certain ideas, and through their efforts advanced the cause of monotheism and gave a more spiritual as well as a more universal content to religious aspirations.[4] Of course there are

[1] Ps. lxxiv. 9. For a very interesting discussion of chronology and historical setting, as well as commentary of this Psalm, see Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms*, pp. 439–48.

[2] For a suggestive treatment of this subject, see Charles, *Between Old and New Testaments*, pp. 38–45.

[3] See quotation from *Jewish Encyc.*, i. 676, p. 44 id.

[4] Although the conception of the Kingdom of God is present

exceptions to this general trend, but that it was the general trend there can be no doubt. Nevertheless the mode of expression, the recording of mental pictures or visions,[1] relying as it does upon the richness of imagination with the minimum check of reason, lent itself to all kinds of extravagance and unreality. Moreover, owing to the strictures, or perhaps merely to the passive resistance, of the religious authorities, these earnest men were unable to express themselves with the decision and force of the earlier prophets. They may also from their very circumstances have lost in some measure the power and sureness of spiritual perception which their ancestors had possessed, possibly also their sense of responsibility. Accordingly they 'half revealed and half concealed' their thought in magnificent, sometimes extravagant, pictures. Yet when all is said which can be said in depreciation of this late product of Hebrew genius, we cannot dismiss it lightly, for it was in circles largely controlled by Apocalyptic ideas that the forces which were to regenerate the world had their origin. Jesus of Nazareth denounced the conventional Pharisaism, and ignored Sadduceeism,[2] but never assailed or reproached the prevalent Messianic expectations of the

in the prophets (Isa. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22; also Mic. iv. 1–13), to apocalyptic is due its great enrichment, expansion, and spiritualization. Our Blessed Lord used language which the Apocalyptic literature had taught his hearers to appreciate at least to some extent. The terms 'Kingdom of God' and 'Son of Man', and the terminology of his doctrine of 'the Last Things' were by no means novel to His contemporaries. It is possible that this interesting subject will be touched upon again in the course of this investigation. The ideas of immortality, resurrection, and final judgement, universal in its scope, are also themes which are strongly developed in Apocalyptic writings.

[1] See H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, introd. (§ 2).

[2] Probably because it was negligible as a spiritual force. The false direction and tone of Pharisaism made it dangerous: Sadduceeism was passive—a spent force.

people (though he did sometimes check their ignorant or premature ebullitions) which were fostered by Apocalyptic writings and teachings. He did indeed make large use of the method Himself. These are significant facts.

And the facts are easy enough to understand when it is seen that in Apocalyptic literature the most considerable theological and ethical advance was made during the few centuries preceding Christ. The tendency of the ruling authorities was jealously to guard and preserve the religious records of the past. Their eyes were fixed upon the past, and their influence was directed towards suppressing re-interpretation, innovation, novel and strange doctrine. But there were elements in the race, remnants of the old prophetic party which could not rest in a conservative attitude, could not believe that God had spoken for the last time, that the future held no hopes, that spiritual aspirations were to remain unsatisfied, that new experiences would not call for new explanations. To a large extent the apocalyptists represent these elements for us. There are also other data which suggest that the Judaism of Jesus' day was not so simple nor so stereotyped as early nineteenth-century historians were wont to assume. It is, however, the literature of vision and revelation which proves the existence of a large party of devout men who were neither Pharisees, Sadducees, nor Herodians, who were not so eccentric as to be esteemed dangerous by the authorities, nor so ascetic as to withdraw altogether from the social life of the race like the Essenes,[1] or the Egyptian Jewish community described by Philo under the title of *Therapeutae*.[2] In fact the writers at the head of this school

[1] See Lightfoot, *Epp. of St. Paul—Colossians and Philemon* (Dissertation: the Essenes, pp. 345–417); also Jos., *Bell. Iud.*, Bk. II. 8.

[2] See *De Vita Contemplativa*, a reputed work of Philo; also Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, i. 24, 178–81.

evince a culture quite equal to that of their contemporaries, a creative power in advance of them, a depth of spiritual and ethical perception quite foreign to the average Pharisaic scribe or Sadducaic priest, and a catholic-mindedness which is extraordinary when we consider the narrowing influences of the national life. Probably Apocalyptic teachers largely impregnated the mass of the people with their ideas, kept alive the Messianic hope, and were responsible for the many who like Simeon and Anna were waiting for the redemption of Israel.

It is easy, therefore, to understand that this movement was not in favour with the responsible and accredited exponents of Judaism. It was a progressive and spiritually liberalizing movement. Though it was not a conscious and deliberate effort like that of Philo to combine Jewish religion and Greek speculation, and so make monotheism acceptable to a wider public, it certainly tended, among its more contemplative adherents at least, to weaken the sentiment of racial exclusiveness. Though purely Hebraic in origin, method, and spirit, the Apocalyptic writings, intent upon ultimate things, upon sin and righteousness, judgement and blessedness, and upon God, laid small stress upon the minutiae of contemporary religious life; and their effect would be to produce in their readers a sense of the comparative unimportance of the traditions of men. Then, those members of the ruling classes who dreaded change, and were politically as well as religiously conservative, looked askance at theories and aspirations which made the masses restless, and which were so often misconstrued by the ignorant, and tended in the direction of riot and revolt. For the spiritual conceptions of the apocalyptists, clothed as they were in imaginative language, full of martial and sensuous figures, lent themselves to material interpretations by crude intelligences. The result was a general craving for new things, and occasionally attempts

were made to hasten the Kingdom of God with violence. Theudas,[1] and 'that Egyptian'[2] of the Book of the Acts, the revolts narrated by Josephus,[3] are a sufficient indication of the general restlessness of those days, and a partial justification of the repressive policy of the Jewish authorities. It were too much to say that these irregular and abortive efforts were the direct outcome of Apocalyptic teaching, or that such teaching was responsible for them, except in the sense that the Apocalypse of St. John was responsible for the extravagances of the Anabaptists of the Reformation Period, or those of the Fifth Monarchy men in the days of Cromwell. Nevertheless there was sufficient connexion between the two to account for the dislike of such teaching which the contemporary authorities exhibited; while the tone of the teaching itself—its other-worldliness, its indifference to the traditions of the elders, except in the broadest sense, its universalism—made it the object of Rabbinic suspicion and latent hostility. For as soon as Pharisaic Rabbinism had been freed from Sadducaic rivalry, it hastened to give the final blow to the Apocalyptic movement. That movement has never recovered, though in mediaeval Judaism there have been recrudescences of Apocalyptic interest. But its literature has been banned and condemned as dangerous and heretical. This, as far as Judaism is concerned, but Christianity in truth became the heir of apocalyptic zeal and spiritual receptiveness, and into this new channel were drained all the progressive, vital, and catholic influences which the religion of revelation had developed.

But in pre-Christian days the Apocalyptic movement kept Jewish religion from petrification and maintained the

[1] Acts v. 36; also Judas of Galilee 'in the days of the enrolment', v. 37.

[2] Acts xxi. 38.

[3] Jos., *Antiq.*, Bk. XVII. 6, 9, XVIII. 3, XX. 5: *Bell. Iud.*, Bk. II. 13, &c.

masses in a state of expectancy, the spiritual condition of the people being such that, although susceptible of false leading and imposture, it was also ready to respond to the stern ethical teaching of the Baptist, and to appreciate something of the significance of the utterances of the Son of Man. That is, it was sufficiently responsive to make the mission of John and the Ministry of Jesus mighty spiritual successes, however much they were superficially, and materially, failures. Even so, the constant misinterpretation of the aims and principles of Jesus, not only by His avowed enemies but by His most loyal followers and intimate friends, suggests the weakness of the Apocalyptic cult, its visionary, vague, and impracticable characteristics. And this weakness causes us to believe that, had not a vitalizing and invigorating force been brought into contact with it, 'the new prophecy' would have lost itself in vapourings, and died of its own ineptitude.

CHAPTER IV

THE HERODIAN AGE

THE main features of the leading schools of thought, or parties, among the Jews in the time of Our Lord hardly require exposition. The tenets and sentiments of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians are sufficiently well known in outline from the pages of the New Testament and the statements of Josephus. It would, however, be possible to acquire a partial impression from the New Testament and an erroneous one from Josephus.[1] To begin with, one important point is apt to escape the careless or un-

[1] The New Testament is only concerned with Jewish sectarianism as it touches Our Blessed Lord and His Ministry; Josephus is striving to create an impression favourable to his race upon Gentiles.

instructed reader; the denunciations of Jesus are directed against the inconsistency of Pharisaic conduct, the ostentation and unreality of Pharisaic professions, the smothering of the Law of God by the traditions of men, rather than against their doctrines. On the other hand, he barely notices the Sadducees, except on the one occasion when He refutes their problem and places the solution of it on a totally different, in fact a supra-mundane, plane.[1] There is, however, no doubt (though the certainty is opposed to the commonly received opinion) that the most active agents against Him in the final stage of His Ministry were Sadducees. And in the repressive measures inaugurated against the nascent Church, the Sadducees, as was natural, took a leading part; the Pharisees either appear vaguely and elusively, or, as on one occasion, favourably passive.[2] The Herodians were a political party rather than a religious sect, and may be disregarded in the present discussion. To return to the great religious sects, the Sadducees as far as doctrine was concerned were the conservative party, rigid adherents of the Mosaic Law, accepting nothing as of faith but what appeared therein, or could infallibly be proved thereby, and hence treating as not of revelation such matters as immortality, the ministry of angels, the resurrection of the body, and the Messianic hopes. The Pharisees were the progressives of the time[3] and their theology was richer by reason of a wider view of revelation. They recognized practically the contents of the Canon of the Old Testament, later ratified at Jamnia, as of binding authority. They also incorporated in

[1] Matt. xxvi. 23 ff.; Mark xii. 18 ff.; Luke xx. 27 ff.

[2] Acts v. 33 ff. The admonition of the Pharisaic Rabbi produced a *laisser-faire* policy, which was just what the Apostolic Church needed at the moment. Note also the effect of St. Paul's doctrinal appeal to the Pharisees (Acts xxiii. 6 ff.).

[3] W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Books of the Apocrypha*, p. 154.

their teaching and treated with exaggerated respect what Our Lord calls 'the traditions of men', i. e. the exposition and rulings of succeeding Rabbis upon the text of Scripture. This practice had the effect of bewildering the simple followers of the Law, and of magnifying the letter at the expense of the Spirit. It may be said, therefore, that the Pharisees were doctrinally much nearer to Jesus than the Sadducees in that they accepted so much more than the latter of what Our Lord claimed to be Himself the Fulfilment. On the other hand, the Sadducees, who made no great spiritual claims and were less susceptible to the sins of spiritual pride and hypocrisy, did not incur to the same degree His righteous indignation. They had not accepted so much and therefore so much could not be expected of them.[1] But as I have indicated above, the apocalyptists who held the same doctrinal position as the Pharisees, though in a more spiritual and less legalistic manner, were the party from which Jesus received sympathy, and it was from the elements in the nation most influenced by them that the bulk of His followers was drawn.

It is perhaps natural that we should hastily assume a nation-wide numerical preponderance to the Pharisaic sect. In the Gospel narratives it occupies the foreground in antagonism to the Mission of Jesus. This may easily be accounted for not so much by greatness of number, as by special antipathy of sentiment. The leaven of the Pharisees was diametrically opposed to the leaven of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Hence the position of this sect in the evangelic narratives. But as far as we can gather, the number of Pharisees, i. e. the membership in

[1] It is a mistake, however, to regard the Sadducees as irreligious and lax in reference to the Law. Possibly sceptics and careless livers were found in their ranks, but the *raison d'être* of the party was the loyal maintenance of *the Law*.

the fraternity in relation to the whole population, was insignificant, not more than 7,000 in all. Of course their zeal, their reputation for sanctity and learning, gave the Pharisees an influence far wider than their actual numbers. The Sadducees must almost have equalled them numerically, yet in spite of lofty station and high-priestly affiliations they did not secure the same popular veneration. Indeed they displayed no eagerness to make proselytes; they were conservative, cultivated, and spiritually sluggish. These traits would also explain why they were not at first conspicuous in opposition to new opinions. When, however, the instincts of self-preservation were aroused they acted ruthlessly enough, and the history of the Apostolic propaganda in Jerusalem shows that their alarm was not easily allayed.

As to the sect of the Essenes there is very little information available. Most of it has been collected and presented to us by Bishop Lightfoot in his inimitable way.[1] Certainly the data supplied by him, and what has been brought to light since his day, represent the Essenes as intrinsically interesting, but as a negligible quantity in the national life. Their withdrawal from the common affairs of the people may have won them a grudging respect but did not gain them influence. The Jew has but little sympathy for the eremite and coenobite, and the source of what was peculiar to Essenism was alien, not Jewish.

But the masses of the people were impregnated with Messianic ideas and hopes which originated in their consciousness of being the children of Promise. The prophets strengthened and developed this consciousness: the apocalyptists kept it alive, indeed quickened the sense of the immediacy of fulfilment in an age when the atmosphere would appear most depressing, and the circumstances most untoward. If the Holy City and Judea were more

[1] See above, p. 36 (foot-note 1).

influenced by the official parties, it was in Galilee that the Messianic hopes were widely prevalent.

But the Hebrew of Palestine at this era was susceptible of other influences to which he yet offered a stouter resistance than his brethren of the Diaspora. Nothing, and no one, can remain unaffected by environment. Even the Hebrew with his intense individuality is controlled and in some degree moulded by it. The atmosphere of Jerusalem was Jewish of the purest sort, but the Galilaean was exposed to Gentile influences—Syrian and Hellenic. The population of Galilee was large, and it contained many thriving cities in which the foreign element was considerable, notably Tiberias.[1] And though the Galilaeans were celebrated for their fidelity to Judaism, yet it is possible that the separative tendencies, fostered by 'scribes and lawyers' and exemplified by the Pharisaic sect, carried less weight with them than it did with their co-religionists of the Southern Province. This, not merely because Apocalyptic had fixed their attention upon things beyond and above the normal narrowness of their race, but because close proximity to, and intercourse with, Gentiles had in some respects encouraged feelings of friendliness and sympathy.

Such were the surroundings in which Jesus of Nazareth 'grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men'.[2] We have no clear information as to His earthly education, but we may feel certain that it included the best elements within reach. In the narrative of the visit of the Holy Family to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old there is a suggestion that this education had already produced extraordinary results—'All that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.'[3]

[1] See art. 'Tiberias', Alex. Souter, *Dict. of Christ and of the Gospels*, vol. ii.

[2] Luke ii. 52. [3] Luke ii. 47.

It is, however, His Public Ministry which furnishes proof that Jesus was not only deeply versed in the Old Testament Scriptures but that He also possessed a wide knowledge of the current interpretation of the same, and that the tradition of the Elders though depreciated was yet intimately understood by Him. The exclamation of the Scribes, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned!'[1] need not be taken seriously as being based upon known facts of Our Lord's early years. It is the cry of the self-complacent metropolitan who hastily assumes that there is neither culture nor knowledge outside the circle of his own experience. It does not necessarily imply that the earthly education of Jesus had been neglected, or that the deficiency had been supplied in a supernatural manner. It merely illustrates the narrowness of view which obtained in the official ranks of educated Judaism. That Jesus possessed 'letters' is no matter for astonishment. It is the use He made of knowledge; the profundity, vitality, and creativeness of His Thought in regard to it which, in conjunction with other facts, causes us to realize that with Him we are in the presence not of a learned Rabbi but of the Son of God.

CHAPTER V

HELLENIZING INFLUENCES

But among the great moulding influences of Judaism none was greater than those created by the Dispersion. So long as the Hebrew people were confined within their own borders, their action upon other peoples was very much restricted; in the same way the reaction of other peoples upon them was also limited. But from the date of the downfall of the Northern Kingdom till the present

[1] John vii. 15.

day, action and reaction have been very marked and on the whole beneficial. The deportation of the inhabitants of Judah came at a time when monotheism, with its dependent doctrines, had become tolerably fixed. It is reasonable also to assume that the faithful monotheistic element which was contained in the earlier deportation, that from the Northern Kingdom, united and became ultimately assimilated to the remnant of the House of Judah. Prophetic teaching which persisted, and probably was intensified during the Exile, finally consolidated and established the Hebrew in his true and pure worship. Henceforward it would seem to be impossible to shake the fidelity of the sons of Israel to the worship of their God.

If, therefore, monotheism could not be shaken, the *raison d'être* of a separative and exclusive policy was abolished, and the People of God were in a fit condition to confer and receive benefits from the rest of the world. But of course the contemporary Israelite could not see things in a calm and judicial spirit. Perhaps he was right; perhaps the dangers of intercourse were still existent. At any rate this was the conviction of many devout souls as well as the instinct of the people generally. The Gentile was a cruel taskmaster to be condemned not merely as the agent of national affliction, but on religious grounds, as the enemy of Yahweh. And this survival of an acute stage of the racial spiritual experience persisted, and still persists. The breakwater against the floods of polytheism remained, although the perils of inundation had long passed away. It was natural and perhaps inevitable, but it became the chief obstacle in the way of religious progress and expansion. Occasionally some teacher would break loose from the spirit of excessive nationalism and enunciate doctrines on human, and not solely on Hebraic, grounds, or proclaim an age to be when the Gentiles would sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Exilic and post-

Exilic prophets are, generally speaking, broader in their outlook than their predecessors. Upon the basis of their elders' monotheism they are reaching out to a fuller comprehension of God's Universal Fatherhood. Yet it is not a conviction; it is merely the indulgence of a larger hope. Nevertheless we note the same tone in the writer of the Book of Jonah, in some of the Wisdom Literature, and among apocalyptists. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that there is a current of quasi-Catholic Judaism flowing towards, and later to be absorbed in, the Christian Church.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the earlier compulsory emigrations from Ephraim first, and Judah afterwards, the former to Assyria, the latter to Babylon, had a disintegrating effect, and the prophecies of Ezekiel point to a rather widespread apostasy. Nevertheless there was 'a remnant' which stood faithful, and in this remnant must be reckoned not merely the few who returned to the waste places of Judah and the battered walls of Zion under Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, but a considerable population which still preferred (yet not in any spirit of disloyalty) to dwell by the waters of Babylon. The Hebrews who continued in exile did so partly from necessity, partly because under the milder rule of Persian monarchs they were allowed the full and free exercise of their religion. These clung to the worship of Yahweh and the traditions of their fathers with the same tenacity as that which marked their repatriated brethren. To provide opportunities of congregational instruction and common prayer, meeting-places were erected,[1] the Law and other sacred

[1] I believe that the worship of the Synagogue as seen in the New Testament had its origin in the Babylonian Exile, though the germs of the institution were no doubt much earlier. See art. 'Synagogue' (Moss), *Dict. of Christ and the Gospels*; also Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, p. 337, for a much later date.

writings were translated and transcribed into the vernacular of the country. Teachers and interpreters of the Scripture kept the faith pure, and applied it to the needs of the people in their new situation. Connexion with the returned exiles and the holy scenes of their ancestral history was maintained by frequent resort to the services of the rebuilt and restored Temple, especially at the periods of the great Feasts like those of the Passover, Pentecost, and Purim. Nevertheless they dwelt among a strange people, spoke an alien language, adopted no doubt to a great or less degree the manners and customs of their Gentile neighbours. Hebrew insularity was toned down imperceptibly, and the Hebrew character, strengthened by centuries of discipline to resist polytheistic tendencies and practices, was now fit to receive, and did receive, many new impressions and became the recipients of the culture of the day. Later Hebrew thought received several fresh ideas from Babylonian and Persian sources, not in such a way as to impair the great body of monotheistic doctrine, but merely to give a wider outlook and a gentler spirit to those who professed it.

But when the Macedonian conquests unlocked the gates of Hellenic culture and spread the Greek language, arts, and literature over the Eastern world, Hebraism was deeply affected together with other Oriental systems and modes of thought. No doubt the Hebrew was less susceptible to alien manners and ideals than Mesopotamian, Syrian, and Egyptian. He consciously, and conscientiously, resisted these influences. Nevertheless he could not but flow with the current of the age ; the Jew of the Dispersion found he must learn Greek and use it in daily intercourse with his Gentile neighbours, just as his forbears had used Chaldee. The Jew was encouraged to emigrate, and found scope for his peculiar talents in Antioch, in the cities of Asia Minor, and above all in Egypt. It was in this

country that Alexander in 331 B. C. had founded the city which has always retained and ever conferred lustre upon his name.

Great world-cities are a commonplace of modern life. We have grown accustomed to masses of population like London and New York, places which have to a large extent outgrown national idiosyncracies, and have become more or less reproductions of the world at large upon a smaller scale. And furthermore our present civilization has been productive of artificial capitals, places which have been designed consciously to become what they are. Sites carefully chosen, streets marked out with mathematical precision, a fine square here, a Government house there, a Parade Ground somewhere else. Petrograd, Berlin, Washington have made us familiar with such city-building. Hence we are in a position to understand the existence of centres like Alexandria better than the people of any other period since the final break-up of the Roman Empire. Alexandria was *par excellence* a city of design, and in its development acquired a cosmopolitan character.

Even to-day, when the whole world is open to the restless, the curious, and the health-seeker, Egypt compels multitudes to its shores. Its bright sunshine, its warm and beautiful climate, its historic associations stretching away into the obscurity of the prehistoric, its almost weird rejuvenation under British auspices, draw the minds of all, and until the present unrest,[1] the persons of many. What must have been the fascination when a genial and enlightened monarch [2] advertised its charms and presented in his capital city all that made Hellas home to the cultivated Greek, while around lay the vivid witness of that

[1] A. D. 1921–2.

[2] Ptolemy Soter (306–285 B. C.) is especially in the writer's mind, but the epithets would, I fancy, fairly well apply to most of the Ptolemies, despite their many vices.

ancient civilization which even the proud Athenian was content to claim as his original.[1]

But no metropolis claiming to be cosmopolitan in ancient or modern days has ever failed to attract the Jew, and during the greater part of its illustrious history Alexandria contained an immense Jewish population. It has, indeed, been asserted that one-third of its six or seven hundred thousand inhabitants belonged to this race. Certainly the Jews possessed their Ghetto, Regio Judaeorum. This was one of the three districts of the city, and it is quite possible that, as in modern cities, the Jew was also to be found outside his specially assigned district. We cannot assume that the population of each region was rigidly fixed and its population exclusively Greek, Hebrew, and Egyptian respectively. But it is reasonable to suppose that the Jewish population was not appreciably smaller than that of the other two elements ; the more so as we have evidence not only of its commercial and intellectual activity but of the jealousy which the other races of the city exhibited towards it, occasionally breaking out in rioting and massacre.

Though it will be necessary in the course of this treatise to refer constantly to Alexandria, one must do so here simply to give its proper weight to the strongest influence to which the Hebrew was subject, namely, the Hellenic.

[1] Herodotus, *Hist.* ii. 11 ; Plato, *Timaeus*, 21–5. In the latter Critias speaks of the Egyptians and Athenians as of coeval and coequal civilization in prehistoric times, but it is the Egyptians who retain the memory of this hoary past and impart it to Solon. An old priest aptly expresses the point of view : 'Oh, Solon, Solon ! You Hellenes are always boys, and there is no aged Hellene.' Critias and those to whom he tells the story display no wounded racial pride in the face of this declaration, and I think the legend may be accepted as representing the common view held by cultivated Hellenes as to the source of their immediate civilization. The possibility of the Phoenicians being the medium of their intercourse still holds good.

For it was under this influence chiefly that the Jew developed during the centuries immediately preceding the Advent of Christ. Wherever he found himself outside the narrow borders of Palestine—nor was he altogether immune even there, as we have already seen—he came into touch with the Greek language, customs, and ideas. Hellenic civilization was quite as vigorous and far more permeative than his own. Hellenism was diffusive: Judaism intensive. The trend of Jewish thought was Godward: Hellenic manward. The Jew was intuitive: the Greek reflective. The main interest of the Jew was ethical: that of the Greek intellectual. As a matter of fact these two elements were complementary the one to the other, and each needed the other to make its distinctive gifts an effective and permanent contribution to the true advancement of the human race. For the moment it may be enough to say that, humanly speaking, the products of Jewish genius and the noble qualities of the Jewish spirit would never have passed the barriers of Hebrew racialism had not the humanizing influences of the Greek in some measure removed, or at least reduced the height of those barriers. Egyptian, Babylonian, and Persian had in the past each left some impress. But it was only the last to which the Hebrew in any way lent himself deliberately, and then he did so with large reservations. A common hatred of idolatry drew the Hebrew and the most humane of Oriental despotisms to a mutual appreciation. The Persian also in his best days possessed a comparatively high standard of morality, and this made its appeal to the clean-living Jew. In regard to other nations it was a true instinct which strengthened the Jew against their influence, recognizing them to be upon a lower moral and spiritual plane. But none of the former races with whom the Hebrews had come in contact had such varied and attractive gifts to offer as the Hellene, who after the Macedonian conquests

spread his wares before the world, and nowhere was there such a display of treasures—philosophic, scientific, and artistic—presented to mankind, and among others to the Jew, as at Alexandria. The Jew, with other Orientals, succumbed at least outwardly, and in some measure indeed inwardly, and became if not a Hellene, at any rate a Hellenist.

Apart from atmosphere, and from influences too elusive and subtle to be made objects of profitable investigation, the most important product of Jewish Hellenistic culture was the Septuagint—the earliest version of the Sacred Writings of the Ancient People of God. The mere fact of translation bears witness to the broadening effects of Greek civilization. Here are the holy books of the most exclusive people in the world set forth, not in a mystic tongue unfamiliar to the vulgar, sacred in proportion to its unintelligibility, and only to be expounded by a sacerdotal caste, but in the 'lingua franca' of the day, widely circulated, accessible to all. The significance of this initial fact is strengthened by the apparent aims of the translators, which were not merely to edify the faithful, but to commend the worship of the One God to the Gentiles. A careful observer will notice that the cruder anthropomorphisms of the Hebrew original are paraphrased and the barbarities of early national history euphemized.[1] The alterations are not in themselves very startling, but when we consider the innate dislike of the Hebrew for tampering even with the letter of Scripture, they witness to the pressure of environment upon him and his desire that the religion of his fathers should dress itself therein with appropriate garments.

Another indication of a less rigid spirit among the Hellenists than that which possessed the home-dwelling Jews is perhaps recognizable in their enlarged Canon.

[1] H. B. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. i, Introduction, pp. 325 ff.

The Scribes and Lawyers,[1] *laudatores temporis acti*, drew the line of canonicity in the Age of Artaxerxes. Thus the Book of Esther was included within the sacred limits; Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, and 1 Maccabees—to mention some of the finest of later writings—were excluded from the Hebrew Canon. It is difficult to understand with regard to these latter works what principle secured their exclusion except a veneration for the writings of antiquity, a sentiment which vindicated itself by placing a chronological barrier between ancient and modern.[2] However, there are few who would dispute that the average of inspiration is much lower in the collection known as the Apocrypha than in the Hebrew Canon. It is the method of demarcation through the debatable territory which is questionable. There are writings of the Apocrypha which seem to rise above the level of several of the writings included within the Old Testament proper. That these have been rescued from oblivion, and, possibly indeed, from extinction, is due to their inclusion in the Greek version of the Old Testament. We may also be grateful that the quaint stories of Bel and the Dragon, of Tobit, and others, have been preserved since they supply us with interesting literary material and also incidentally reveal something of the thought, life, and practice of the Hebrew people in post-Canonical days. Certainly those who were responsible for the Septuagint version were no more moved by scientific principles in their selection than their more conservative Palestinian brethren. But the wider scope of

[1] In the New Testament practically synonymous; if there is any distinction it is probably on these lines—the Scribes preserved, interpreted, and handed on the Law, oral and written, the Lawyers administered it.

[2] Though the Hebrew Canon was not stereotyped until (*circa*) A. D. 100 at Jabneh (Jamnia), Philo's references show that it was practically settled in his day, and indeed imply settlement reaching back a considerable time.

their Canon undoubtedly indicates a wish to include rather than to exclude, and a willingness to see the Divine Purpose at work later than an arbitrary date-line beyond which the Spirit of God can no longer move the spirits of men.

CHAPTER VI

PHILO

One of the most interesting personalities of later Judaism is Philo of Alexandria. He was a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, though there is no evidence to show that he came under even the indirect influence of the Founder of Christianity. It is true that Jerome speaks, or seems to speak, of Philo as one of those who built or adorned the Christian Church. St. Jerome's declaration on this point is somewhat ambiguous, but, however that may be, there is ground for a more respectful and more general recognition among Christians of this great Jewish thinker.[1] The student of Christianity must go to Philo to appreciate the religion out of which Christianity sprang. In him we see Judaism in its finest aspects and in its most Catholic phase. To some he may appear more as a Greek philosopher than as a Hebrew monotheist. But this is a mistake. He was bent in all his literary efforts to commend monotheism to the Hellenic mind, and in pursuit of this object he often speaks like a Greek. But it will be observed that in his philosophy he is eclectic; he selects those features of Grecian philosophy which appeal to him as a monotheist. In part of his theology he is a Platonist, though not like

[1] The above sentence is a reminiscence of a striking passage contained in an article by J. H. A. Hart upon Philo, which appeared in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1909 (January ?). If I remember rightly, the article was in the form of a review of a work on Philo by Émile Bréhier.

the great master dealing with the fluid results of speculation, but with eternal realities. What Plato calmly and vaguely speculates upon, Philo *knows*. Here speaks the Hebrew, not the Greek. Plato appeals to the Alexandrian because, with some apparent wavering, he upholds the doctrine of the Transcendence of the Great First Principle.

In other connexions Philo betrays Stoic leanings. On the whole, Stoicism makes the strongest appeal to him of all the philosophical cults of his time. Yet it draws him not as a philosopher but as a Hebrew. It fits in best with all his intuitions, with the faith of his fathers, with the virile morality which he has inherited. This austere code of ethics attracts the Jew as it did the Roman, though on different grounds, which will be discussed later, and Philo was a Jew. Again, the very pantheism of the Stoic is suggestive. It suggests the truth which as a heart-felt, not speculative, monotheist he upholds most firmly—that God has not left himself without witness on the earth. But—how explain these things to a Hellene! That was the difficulty. So he fastened upon the theory of mediation. The Transcendent God acts upon, or communicates with, the universe through properties, qualities, agencies, λόγοι, Λόγος. This (or these) emanation(s)—he is sufficiently vague and uncertain in his terminology and apparently in his thought—fills the universe with God and makes it in a sense Divine. Of course man shares in this blessedness of being moved and inspired by the Divine qualities in a pre-eminent degree. It is by this means that God speaks to every child of man, but especially to those of the highest type, leaders of thought and spirit—to Moses and the rest.

Here very broadly is the philosophical theology of Philo. It is Hebrew monotheism expressed in terms of Hellenic thought. Philo's religion supplied the matter; Greek philosophy the form. And this mode of thought is cer-

tainly patient of the idea that God might become Incarnate. That the great Alexandrian has been looked at askance by the Rabbis of post-Christian Judaism need cause no surprise. There can, however, be no doubt of his substantial orthodoxy. It is not his faith but his tone, his sentiment, which is suspect. He Hellenized overmuch, which does not mean that he sacrificed monotheistic dogma, but that he saw its scope was wider than the racial borders, that he felt something of the conviction which struck Peter with such amazement, ' Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him.' [1] In his own person he represents that of which the Septuagint Version was the written testimony, and the Dispersion the vehicle, namely, a catholic religion which had not yet acquired a vital force, nor a living voice. He saw that monotheism was fitted to be, and ought to be, a universal religion, and he did his part in trying to make it so. He failed to do so because, like most learned men of the ancient world, his appeal was too narrow both socially and intellectually. By itself the work of Philo is barren : as a link in the chain of religious development it is most significant. Chronologically and logically it stands last in the process of preparing the meal for the leaven. The first measure of meal, its strong, hard, original grain, ground fine in the vicissitudes of Hebrew national life, its flour softened and made more palatable by mixture of other types of meal, chiefest of them being that of Hellas, was thus prepared to receive the gift of vitality.[2] The acting and reacting influences of Hellenism and Judaism had made their final profitable effort in the evolution of such a man as Philo and in making available the products of his mind and spirit.

[1] Acts x. 34–5.

[2] See Introduction, general argument, and recurring metaphor of the meal and leaven.

CHAPTER VII

THE FULNESS OF TIME

In the preceding pages the Hebraic character and its development have been under hasty review. The spirit and tendencies of Hebraism as they issued forth in Judaism [1] have been examined with sufficient thoroughness for the purpose in hand. That purpose is to account for the Jew as he was in the era of the Appearance of Jesus of Nazareth; to exhibit his possibilities and limitations; to endeavour to estimate the quality of his spiritual life, and to appraise its vitality and its capacity for self-development. Let us now briefly examine contemporary conditions. None of the material is exactly new, though some of it has only recently secured the attention its importance has deserved, while it would be no exaggeration to say that the whole perspective of the Herodian Age has been altered for us in this present generation.[2]

The priestly, aristocratic party, which bore the name of Zadok, and whose adherents were called Sadducees, were conservative and cautious in their policy as they were in matters of faith. And indeed their position was one fraught with great peril. The high-priestly families and their dependants comprised a party which was important not from its numbers but its social prestige. They were the titular guardians of the worship and destinies of Israel. They stood between the covetousness, tyranny, and cruelty of Gentile overlords, and the restless, frequently rebellious,

[1] Here used in its strictest sense · cf. Fairweather, *Background of the Gospels*, p. 11.

[2] Chiefly in the weight given to Apocalyptic opinions and beliefs both in their literary form and in their oral dissemination among the people. Schweitzer, Charles, Oesterley, and Box are among the pioneers in this department of research.

multitude of their own people. Hence their responsibility was very great. It is unfair to impute to them mere selfishness and pride of station. Since they occupied the ' seats of the mighty ' in perilous times, it was their duty, as well as their interest, to suppress the zeal of mob leaders. The slightest sign of popular rebellion, and the power of Rome might find a pretext for removing the last vestiges of national independence, and the precious symbols of their monotheistic faith. They were religious men after a sort, and held to a form of faith for which they claimed Pentateuchal authority. From this, the fervour and intensity of the prophetic spirit was excluded. It was coldly ethical. There was no enthusiasm about it, very little emotion, and no missionary energy whatever. It was useful as a restraining force, but it had no positive aggressive value. More than any other element in the nation life, Sadduceeism represented the stagnation of Judaism. To show that it is possible to make a far less favourable estimate of the tone and tenets of the ruling class in Judaism than I have done, I quote the following passage from a comparatively recent article in a reputable religious journal : ' The Sadducees were as unappreciative of the greatness of their high calling as the Israelites had been in the wilderness. . . . Just as the Israelites were content with the immediate satisfaction of their bodily cravings, so were the Sadducees content with the material advantages of the Theocracy. Having the emoluments of office they were fairly well content.' [1]

The Pharisaic party, though naturally more active and alert, was in no better case. Having its origin in a genuine spiritual movement, it soon became satisfied with externals, the machinery of religion. Of course its noblest exponents were men of true religious zeal and honest intent. The

[1] Rev. S. Liberty, Review of *Political Relations of Christ's Ministry*, *Expository Times* (September 1916, p. 535).

honoured names of Hillel, Shammai, and Gamaliel so testify. The experiences of St. Paul in his pre-Christian career indicate that there was much religious enthusiasm and moral earnestness in the party. But even at their best these forces were misdirected, and rendered abortive by their false direction, produced religious stagnation rather than progress. The painfully inadequate and depressing effects of legal scrupulousness are nowhere better criticized than by St. Paul, who knew the system inside and out.[1] So much for its best; at its worst, Pharisaism was what Jesus of Nazareth declared it to be.

Nevertheless, we must place to the credit of Pharisaism several things. First of all, it accepted the full content of the Old Dispensation teaching; secondly, it zealously disseminated the knowledge of the same; thirdly, as an integral part of this teaching, it included the Messianic element, and gave consistent testimony to the racial expectation. These valuable characteristics were overshadowed and impaired by many accretions. The Pharisees 'delivered to the people a great many observances by tradition which are not written in the Law of Moses'.[2] So long as prophecy was a strong and authoritative force, so long the Law required no other interpreter; but when prophecy lost its vigour and assurance, the Oral Law of tradition arose, and Rabbinical exegesis almost choked the word of God. Theoretically on a lower level than the Commandments of God, this 'ocean of comment',[3] as some one calls it, was treated practically as of equal authority. It is this sacrilegious tendency which is one of the chief counts in Our Lord's terrible indictment of

[1] Cf. especially Rom. vii. 5–24.

[2] Jos., *Ant.* xiii. 10, 6 (Whiston's translation).

[3] Applied, if I remember rightly, to written exegesis, 'an island of text in an ocean of comment', but equally appropriate to the flood of words which 'darkened counsel' in Our Lord's time.

the sect which is given its fullest expression in the passage beginning, 'The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat,' and proceeds, 'ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men. . . . Woe unto you . . . Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin and have omitted the weightier (matters) of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith. . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.'[1]

As to the racial expectation, their attitude was inconsistent. They included it in the scope of their teaching, and were even zealous propagators of Messianic ideas. The Law and the Messiah were two centres of Jewish thought when Christ appeared,[2] and the Pharisees were exponents of both. But the Law, enlarged by them to the extent which we have seen, fascinated them by its complexity, and practically obscured the Promise. As to this latter, they could not conceive any fulfilment which did not retain themselves in the foreground of the religious stage. They could not believe that the Kingdom of God might possibly imply a revolution; they rather looked for it to establish their own righteousness. Like most people in positions of influence and authority, the maxim 'the first shall be last and the last first' had a disagreeable sound. They were unconscious of disloyalty to their trust, and consequently they believed that, when the Messianic hopes were fulfilled, their efforts would be rewarded, their prejudices respected, and their interests safeguarded. They succumbed to the danger, which is present to religious teachers in every age of becoming 'blind leaders of the blind', to which the only antidote is the daily practice of humility, and of selfless devotion to the service of God. Because of the neglect of these virtues their vision narrowed, their hopes focused on their own well-being, and they

[1] Matt. xxiii. 1–35; also Mark vii. 9.

[2] Cf. art. 'Messiah', *Dict. Christ and the Gospels*, vol. ii, p. 178.

could not read the signs of the times. As their daily practice of religion was narrow, exclusive, and self-centred, so there was little that was humane, charitable, and ennobling in their teaching.

For our present purpose Essenism may be disregarded. Its peculiarities had certain Gentile affiliations. Indeed, the incipient dualism of their doctrines and the ascetic tendencies of their practice were alien to Judaism.[1] Undoubtedly some of the characteristics which were visible among the Essenes powerfully influenced Christianity in later ages, but it is impossible to trace them to the communistic monasticism of this Jewish sect. They had a common source, and that source is to be found among Oriental Gentile cults. But what chiefly causes them to be discounted here is that Essenism was separated from the current of national life.

It was far otherwise with the apocalyptists. These formed no distinct party in Jewish life. Doctrinally they were one with the Pharisees, as indeed were the masses of the people. But in spirit and point of view the difference was sometimes very marked. The official and professional Pharisee, if one may use the term, regarded revelation as complete and its records closed. The Messianic Kingdom, if it were to come, would come according to the declarations of the ancient Prophets and within the rigid lines laid down by the elders. In fact the latter condition was made more important than the former. But the apocalyptists, according to their power, filled the rôle of the prophets of old time. To the new conditions of the Hebrew people they applied prophetic ideas and extended them. In some respects they made them more definite, in others added new features. Indeed, as the hopes of founding a vigorous and independent Jewish State evaporated, these

[1] Lightfoot, *Epp. of St. Paul—Colossians and Philemon*—the Essenes, pp. 354, 372 ff., 384 ff.

pseudonymous teachers developed the other-worldliness of the prophets and applied much which had hitherto possessed a material connotation to the glory of a spiritual kingdom, to the resurrection of the righteous to eternal bliss, and to eternal communion with the Eternal God.[1]

We must not, however, accuse these exponents of later prophecy of indulging in mere dreamy generalities. The outstanding figure of Apocalyptic literature is the Messiah designated variously as the ' Son of Man ', ' the Just One '. ' the Elect One '.[2] He is to become manifest in the fulness of time, and the idea of the Daniel Apocalyptic in regard to the Messiah's pre-existence is reiterated and details added. Of course a considerable portion of Jewish literature of this type is post-Christian and borrows something, possibly, from convictions and theories current in Christian circles. Nevertheless its main lines were laid before the Christian era, and the thought and language of Jesus, of Paul, of the writer of the Apocalypse, had become familiar to their contemporaries, however startling the application may have been. In truth it may be said that the mind and imagination of the masses of the people in Judea, and even more so in Galilee, were steeped in Messianic and eschatological conceptions, stretching back indeed into the Old Testament Canon, but, having been revitalized and given new colour by these strange, unknown writers who issued *Tracts for Hard Times*, drew the thoughts of the multitude away from present earthly disappointment and distress to a glorious heavenly atmosphere where God and His Messiah reign. These wonderful, and frequently extravagant, pictures are most valuable as indicating the method of preparation for some new departure, and also as accounting for the highly wrought expectancy of those days.

[1] Art. ' Apoc. Literature ', Hastings's *Dict. of Christ and the Gospels*, vol. i, p. 93.

[2] Cf. Book of Enoch, 39. 7 ; 46. 1 ; 48. 3 (edit. Charles).

Then we finally referred to the Hellenization of a large portion of Judaism. This affected the Diaspora directly and pre-eminently, but it cannot have left Palestinian Judaism uninfluenced. Viewed broadly this absorption of Greek culture appears to have been decidedly wholesome. Nowhere were there more loyal and convinced monotheists, no more zealous observers of the Law, than among the Jews of Alexandria, Antioch, and Tarsus. Nevertheless they were insensibly moved to the study and admiration of the civilization and the literature of the people among whom they dwelt. They became less rigid, more humane.[1] While Apocalyptic teaching was from inside the national life spiritualizing and broadening Jewish mentality to an appreciable extent, the Greek environment of hundreds of thousands of the sons of Israel was making them more tolerant of their Gentile neighbours, and impregnating them with its best thought. In passing, it may be said that the licence and depravity of heathenism were never assimilated by the Jew in these last ages of his history; they filled him with a profound pity and aroused his missionary spirit; they did not contaminate him. No doubt there were renegade Jews, but, proportionately, they were few. The ancient prophets had done their work well; the scribes and elders fortified that work; the apocalyptists strengthened the inner antidote to Gentile degeneration.

It was among the Jews of the Dispersion that the synagogue chiefly flourished, and where it performed its greatest service. Though the Rabbis tell us that in Jerusalem alone there were four or five hundred synagogues, it seems scarcely credible. Certainly beneath the shadow of the Temple their utility would seem less obvious than in the scattered Jewish settlements of Egypt and Asia

[1] Yet the martyrdom of Stephen was the result of Hellenistic antagonism to his preaching (Acts vi. 9).

Minor. Nevertheless, they might be helpful to the pilgrim Jew in providing a haven where he could meet fellow pilgrims from his own town or locality, and hear familiar teaching in familiar guise. However that may be, the synagogue in alien lands preserved for scattered Jews the sense of racial and religious unity, and maintained in the midst of polytheistic populations little centres of pure monotheistic worship. Points of vantage were they, whence in the fulness of time the masses of heathenism could be assailed. Their value in this respect cannot be over-estimated.

Moreover, I have already pointed out that the Hellenistic phenomenon included that crowning achievement of the *rapprochement* between Hebrew and Hellene, the great Greek version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint, a medium of understanding between the Semitic and Greek cultures. The precious gifts of thought and spirit, of Greek philosophy, and Hebrew religion became familiar, more or less generally, on either side. And it was in this atmosphere of toleration and mutual understanding that the Hellenist, Philo, conceived his great, though abortive, harmonies. Later on Judaism, transformed and energized by a creative contact so that it became a new thing, swept over to absorb into itself the glory of the ancient civilization of Hellas—but I am anticipating.

Probably enough has been said to supply a working knowledge of Jewish conditions in the time of Jesus of Nazareth. These conditions developed in the period between the Exile and the Herodian Age, as I have attempted to describe them in the section immediately preceding the present one. Some had reached the height of their utility and significance; some were nearing their dissolution. Sadduceeism as a distinct element did not survive the Destruction of the Temple.[1] With the

[1] A. D. 70.

extinction of the sacrificial system, disappeared the sacerdotal class. Pharisaism persisted through the period of catastrophe, and remained to organize, upon a synagogic and didactic basis, a Judaism uprooted and cast forth from its ancestral dwelling-place. Apocalyptic optimism and idealism were drained off by degrees from Judaism and went to enrich, and sometimes to hamper, a form of monotheism which sprang from the older faith and, striking out a new course, set forth to conquer the world.

Thus immediately before the moment of enkindling life and energy, the forces of monotheism were like an army awaiting the word to advance against the entrenchments of the enemy. But the avowed leaders of the army, the high-priestly class, were timid and cautious, more alive to the strengthening of their own interests during the period of inaction than anxious to try conclusions with the common foe. Others, the Pharisaic sect, were narrow and local in their view of the campaign, misconceiving its whole character, not content with following the broad principles of discipline which had come to them with the highest authority, but issuing a complex code of instructions bewildering in its ramifications, and irritating in its rigidity to the noblest spirits and to the best minds ; these were satisfied with small efforts, and energy wasted in the attainment of small results. Others again (apocalyptists), not in any position of authority, had finer, broader conceptions which, however, were often marred by incoherence and contradiction ; they were visionary and without vigorous personal force to support or to guide—these shrank from conflict with official leaders, and were content to limit themselves to keeping up the morale of the forces. Finally, there was a strong element in the army coming from remote and widely separated regions, speaking a foreign language, and having new and different thoughts respecting method, though its principles were identical

with those whom we might reasonably term the Head-Quarters Staff. These Hellenists, like Philo and others, were more elastic, more adaptable, than the Home Forces, and some of their leaders thought that much might be learned from the tactics of the enemy. Meanwhile, the rank and file, 'the People of the Land', 'the multitude who knew not the Law', was impatient, anxiously looking for real leadership, credulous of every rumour, eagerly in search of one to lead them to victory, but uncertain what sort of victory they desired. They were, therefore, unstable and unreliable; these either followed Theudas into the wilderness, or cried out, 'Crucify Him', as the spirit of fanaticism, or that of servility and self-interest, momentarily affected them. Throughout the host there was lack of munitions, equipment, and aggressive leadership, but the army was expectant, uneasy under restraint, and eager to advance. When and whence were its needs to be supplied, its eager hopefulness to be gratified by an irresistible sweep forward of the legions of the Lord? Our survey of the field justifies little optimism. The official leaders are no leaders, or else fail to discern the signs of the times. There is no driving force anywhere. On the other hand, the masses of the army are sensitive, and are ready to respond in sufficient numbers and weight for any heroic enterprise, provided it takes the shape of the general expectancy, and is forwarded by a leader who is strong enough to endure persecution and even death for the cause he has espoused.

To revert to the figure which is ever in our minds during the process of this study—the meal had endured an age-long preparation for a great transformation, and was now ready, as ready as it ever could be, for contact with some vital force.

CHAPTER VIII

CONTACT WITH VITAL FORCE

That something momentous occurred during the Herodian period of Jewish history few will be found to deny. Whether it was natural, or supernatural; the result of evolutionary forces finding their full development, emerging from below after subterranean conflict with hostile tendencies; or a power descending, so to speak, from above, designed to quicken and glorify human life, is a problem upon which scientific investigators may reasonably expend themselves, provided that they are ever mindful of two facts, (1) that this is more than a mere physical inquiry, (2) that beyond what is called, rather arbitrarily, *nature*, there are vast fields of speculation where the human intellect may easily go wrong. And the subject with which we are at present dealing is the central problem of the world's life. For many centuries it has occupied the thoughts of the deepest and most reverent minds, and while much light and assistance may be gained by the application of modern scientific methods to the investigation of that which happened, or began to happen, 'when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the King',[1] any merely 'natural' explanation of the Great Mystery which has changed human life so profoundly will fail to convince the heart of mankind.

This *Something* I chose to describe as Vital Force, or 'The leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal'. The first of these three measures I have taken to be Judaism. Its preparation for contact has been described more or less accurately and at some length. It is now necessary to state what is meant by Vital Force in

[1] Matt. ii. 1.

this connexion. And here there is danger of straying into the field of pure theology, or into that of philosophical speculation. Therefore I content myself with indicating briefly what I mean, which is this: *The Vital Force is everything which is involved in the career of Jesus of Nazareth, Who He is and what He did (or is generally supposed to have done), either by His visible, or invisible Presence.* This, I think, is a fair way of putting the case, for it is invariably conceded (1) that the momentous change which took place is bound up with Jesus and His Mission, and (2) that the power which effected this change was not removed with His Corporal removal but rather was opened out and intensified after that removal. This, then, is the Vital Force.

But our concern is with effects, not causes; with the material, not the vital force; with the measures of meal, not the leaven. In marking the changes brought about in the material we cannot help acquiring some impression of the characteristics and power of the vital force. This is all to the good, but it is not our main consideration, which is to estimate effects. *A priori* speculation has a wonderful history, and is adorned with the names of many of the most illustrious of mankind from Plato onwards. It is invaluable as a means of acquiring some sort of knowledge, or semblance of knowledge, in regard to mysteries and eternal verities quite outside the range of intellect by any other method. Yet from the nature of the case its positive contribution to the sum of human knowledge has been small. Its main service to mankind has been to keep human thought alive, and conscious, to the existence, power, and mystery of the Unseen in circumstances where it would otherwise have sunk into gross materialism. But another method is necessary in the subject of this investigation. Forasmuch as something has happened which has profoundly stirred the world and

renewed it with fresh life and power, it seems that it might be worth while to observe and test the changes which have taken place. If it be a movement which has spent its force, then it has a mere historical interest, but if from the time of its inception it has had a permanent influence, and a salutary one, upon human society, it is a subject, not of academic interest, but of pressing importance.

Of late years much has been heard of the philosophic system—it is rather a method—called Pragmatism.[1] Extravagant have been the claims of many of this school, but as a method it has much to commend it. It is, I take it, an application to metaphysics in particular, and to the whole sphere of human intellectual endeavour in general, of the inductive method. By this canon of research, usually associated with the name of Francis Bacon, science from the Elizabethan Age onward has won her greatest triumphs. Nevertheless its application to pure philosophy is revolutionary and its victories are not likely to be so complete as in the field of physical inquiry. Permit, however, a leading exponent of modern philosophy to describe its nature and its value: 'Pragmatism is the doctrine that the whole meaning of a conception expresses itself in practical consequences, consequences either in the shape of conduct to be recommended, or in that of experience to be expected, if the conception be true; which consequences would be different, if it were untrue, and must be different from the consequences by which the meaning of other conceptions is in turn expressed. . . . In methodology, it is certain that to trace and compare their respective consequences is an admirable way of establishing the different meanings of different conceptions.'[2] Its value as an instrument of investigation in the region of

[1] The term itself was first used in a philosophical discussion at Harvard University between C. S. Pierce and William James (1878).

[2] W. Caldwell, *Pragmatism and Idealism*, p. 21.

First Principles and of Ontology is less likely to be so marked as in the study of psychology and of human history. Since this present inquiry is of the latter character, a method which has guided physical research to such mighty discoveries, and has now invaded the area of philosophical speculation, may reasonably be found helpful.

Let us now observe the changes which took place in Judaism during the first century of the present era and try to weigh their importance and determine their significance. We have the best of all authority for testing a tree by its fruits,[1] and we can at least attempt to estimate the depth and extent of a transformation by judging the thing transformed with what it was before. Furthermore, if the transformation was effective in only a part of the whole, a useful comparison may be made between the portion which was vitally changed and that which only received an external impression. For this is what took place in Judaism.

From our review of Jewish religious life in the Herodian Age we may briefly state its condition in the following terms: it was partly stagnant, partly restless; its vital development arrested, its hopes thrown back upon themselves, its pious opinions unratified, its speculations abortive because illogical; its conjectures, often noble, were but visionary; harmonies were instinctively felt, but were elusive and fragmentary. There were all these qualities and symptoms, but no life.

However, in the fourth decade of the first century a change began to manifest itself. Life revealed itself vigorously in a small but growing society imbedded in Judaism. An insignificant company of the seed of Abraham, Galilaeans for the most part, shook off the stagnation, indecision, and petty-mindedness which surrounded them, and by which they had hitherto been infected. Speaking

[1] Matt. viii. 15–20.

broadly, they were men of obscure station and small learning of the accepted sort. As far as we can gather there was nothing in their antecedents to mark them as possessed of brilliant gifts either of thought or action. Apocalyptic dreams, one might reasonably infer, would unfit men for clear, sane thinking, or for the execution of any rational design. And these men had indulged in Apocalyptic dreams like their neighbours; some of them had been fanatics; all, no matter what their native intelligence might be, had been the slaves of their environment.

John, the son of Zacharias, a man of priestly race, a strange prophet brought up in the desert wastes beyond Jordan, had previously converted some, and probably had influenced all. His message, however, was one merely of repentance and preparation. It proclaimed the Day of the Lord as at hand, His Kingdom nigh. But it gave no indication of the character of the Lord's Coming, nor the nature of His Kingdom. In the loneliness of his prison-house the forerunner himself seemed to waver as to the identity of the Messiah. 'Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?'[1] was the message he sent to Jesus of Nazareth. Uncertainty as to what the future might contain, yet conviction that it contained something wonderful and impressive, and exhortation as to conduct in view of what impended—that is the burden of John's ministry. There was no invitation to organize, or even to act; simply to purify oneself, and to wait. Unlike the old prophetic preaching, it was apparently without the accessories of description and imagery, but marked by greater intensity, as was fitting, in the very shadow of stupendous happenings. Nevertheless, it was not from this quarter that the impulse came which was to 'turn the world upside down'.

But the life of John was contemporaneous with that of

[1] Luke vii. 19, 20.

Jesus Whom the son of Zacharias accepted as the Messiah, and Whom he was willing to see wax great at his own expense.[1] Of the life, ministry, and teaching of Jesus we have written records from the hands of disciples which concur in all essential respects with the unbroken tradition of the Christian society.[2] That there is so little external evidence is not surprising to those who are more than superficially acquainted with the age and circumstances in which the events occurred. Learning was confined to the few; the events took place in an obscure province; they were not such as to attract general attention at the outset. But the records written, as it were, from within are full, various, and emphatic as to meaning. They bear upon themselves the stamp of sincerity and singleness of purpose. They reflect the convictions not only of the writers but of the inarticulate mass behind them. They are the literary expression of that which was most surely believed among the Christians of the Apostolic Age.[3] And apart from the transparent sincerity of the writers, which ultimately comes from the same source, they gain their freshness, originality, and power from their subject-matter, Jesus, the Son of Man, the Son of God. It is these qualities which cause the Evangelic narratives, in spite of crudeness of language and of form, to stand unique in the world's literature.

[1] John iii. 25–30.

[2] Corroborative allusions are to be found in Jos. (*Ant.*) to the life and work both of John and of Jesus. These are roughly contemporaneous, the *Antiquities* being completed A. D. 93. Some, however, have looked upon these passages as interpolations by Christian hands, but their genuineness is more widely accepted by scholars than formerly. See articles 'Jews', 'Josephus' (J. H. A. H.), *Encyc. Brit.*, 11th edition; also Thorburn, *Jesus the Christ: Historical or Mythical?* Also Burkitt, *Gosp. of Transmission*, p. 345. From the times of Suetonius and Tacitus references to Jesus, and the religion He founded, become more general among external writers.

[3] Luke i. 1.

CHAPTER IX

FORM AND SUBSTANCE

And these narratives are the substance of the new teaching reduced to writing. Its earliest exposition was oral—delivered with intense earnestness by men who had been closely associated with Jesus from the beginning of His Ministry. Let us consider this new phenomenon from two aspects, (1) its manner or form, (2) its substance or content. I employ this order because it was the manner and form of the new teaching which attracted those whom its substance finally held. The two things, the mode and the substance, are closely connected and yet are easily distinguishable the one from the other. The greatest orator must remain silent if he have nothing to say, or, if he utter words, must be content to see them produce no effect save the tickling of the ears of those who hear them. On the other hand, the loftiest and most original thought must have an adequate expression and a suitable medium. It is to be feared that from time to time the cause of justice and of truth has suffered from lack of powerful advocacy. Much depends upon the force and skill of those who represent a cause. Its success hangs upon the abilities of those representatives. Socrates died because he refused the support of powerful friends and refrained from pleading in his own defence. His innocence could have been triumphantly vindicated. There was plenty to say. There was lacking only some medium to express it. The thing has happened many times in history, and the mind of the Christian goes back in recollection to that tragic, yet pregnant, miscarriage of justice before Caiaphas, and before Pilate, where there was no human

help, and the hand of God was stayed. ' Truly the Son of Man goeth as it was determined.' [1]

Then again, Socrates' point of view, Socrates' method, would have perished but for the intellectual brilliance and literary grace of his pupil, Plato. And this New Thing which had come into the world would shortly have been trodden under foot had there not been found men equal to the task of planting and cultivating it. It may be argued that this New Thing was supernatural, and therefore required no natural means for its propagation. In answer to this it may be affirmed that nothing has ever come into this world, however mysterious and heavenly its origin, which, once introduced, has failed to conform to the principles of life and growth as they obtain in our present condition. Meanwhile, we are not considering its supernatural character but the natural media employed to express this new thing to the world.

As regards (1) the manner and form—we have already noted the ordinary abilities and character of the men who led the movement. The evangelic narratives supply no evidence of moral and spiritual grandeur, except in the case of the Master Himself. There are indications of teachableness, courage, quick spiritual insight, willingness to make the supreme sacrifice, but almost any group of like numbers selected from the masses of any country would probably have contributed the same qualities in much the same proportion. Indeed the choice of the inner circle of disciples would seem to have been regulated on the principle of ' averages '.[2] The greatest upheaval of human society was to be directed by those who, left to themselves, were mediocre and commonplace men.

Be that as it may, shortly after their Master had been taken from them, we see these mediocre men preaching

[1] Luke xxii. 22 ; Mark xiv. 21 ; Matt. xxvi. 24.

[2] Cf. A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* pp. 37–9.

and teaching in such a way that not only were their hearers interested and impressed, but that an increasing multitude of them espoused their cause. Whatever views one may hold as to the Gift of Tongues at Pentecost, there can be no doubt as to the effect of the Apostles' preaching.[1] The manifestations of the Pentecostal Gift were received with amazement, doubt, and some scepticism.[2] But there follows a sermon by the leader of the little group, a poor provincial, an erstwhile fisherman, one who some weeks previously had in craven fear denied his Master, yet who now at immense risk and with stirring, possibly rude, eloquence preaches the doctrine and message of the Master. It seems to have been not entirely devoid of the qualities which were highly prized by the most learned Rabbis of the time—a knowledge of the Scriptures and a skill in application.[3] But there was a freshness and power about it which we can all, I think, feel as we read the second chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, though in that record we have probably a mere summary of what was said. Certainly if we do not feel it, the hearers of the words did, and that, after all, is the matter we are here concerned with. 'Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"' In response to this pathetic plea there was further exhortation, followed by an initiatory rite, 'and there were added unto them about three thousand souls'.[4]

However, there was more in it than this. It is comparatively easy to persuade men to accept certain opinions or doctrines which are remote from life and conduct. At one time people firmly held that the sun moved and the

[1] Cf. G. B. Cutten, *The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, pp. 49 ff.

[2] Acts ii. 12–13.

[3] Cf. Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, p. 21, n. latter part.

[4] Acts ii. 37–41.

earth stood still; people now as firmly believe that the earth revolves round the sun in its yearly course. Neither the one opinion, nor the other, carries with it the necessity of a *volte-face*, or even a modification of one's habits, or one's spiritual outlook. Even so, the scientific fact was stoutly disputed because it was thought to conflict with statements of Holy Writ and implications founded thereon. So soon as the contents of the faith were seen to be unimpaired by the acceptance of the physical fact, opposition dwindled. This will serve to indicate where men are most sensitive. It is in the region of religious and ethical ideas. And it was here where the new teaching struck, and struck hard—in the region of religious and ethical ideas.

They did not merely strike hard; in spite of most untoward circumstances these teachers struck effectively. Here they were, provincial peasants in the metropolis of their race and their religion, frowned upon by a proud, self-sufficient, and learned hierarchy, bereft of the Master Who alone of the little band had previously displayed gifts of leadership, power, and heroism; this contemptible gathering of ignorant men and women dared to raise the controversy which was thought to be dead, the controversy which in all logic had been extinguished with the death of Jesus. These men dared to raise it all up again with an added strength and fervour, and raised it successfully! Instead of a forlorn hope conducted by One Heroic Figure while adherents huddled in the background, here was the brave, uncompromising advocacy of men assured of the strength and invincibility of their cause, men who but yesterday, so to speak, had forsaken their Lord and fled. Moreover, behind them was a little society, quivering with life, maintaining the closest bonds of intimacy and fellowship with its leaders.

After the execution of a loved and trusted leader, it is a commonplace of history that the adherents, dispirited

and disillusioned, should scatter, strive to remain hidden, and eventually seek the obscurity of their ordinary pursuits. Unless a succession of leadership has been provided for, this is the usual phenomenon of miscarried revolutions. But even a cursory examination of the evangelic narratives will show that up to the Crucifixion of the Prophet of Galilee none of the inner circle of disciples had displayed marked capacity for leadership. They seem to have understood their Lord's mission very partially, and what was expected of themselves very little indeed. This is not to say that they had received no training, or that their training was ineffective. It means merely that the time for its exercise had not yet come, and it was only in process of assimilation. Nothing had so far happened to give coherence and order to the chaos of their minds. Much of Our Lord's teaching was too spiritual, too mystical for souls, preoccupied with the earthly vesture of Messianic promises, to understand and appreciate. The tragedy of Calvary over, the Person and Mission of Jesus still fascinated yet baffled them. Among the passages which illustrate the mental attitude of the disciples after their Master's cruel death, there is none more valuable, more beautiful, than that which describes the two wayfarers proceeding to Emmaus.[1] The teaching which he had imparted was overlaid by the sense of personal loss and disappointed hopes; it had been misconstrued and a great grief flooded over it. It needed

> the touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a Voice that is still

to bring it to the surface, and guide bewildered minds to its meaning.

And besides that they needed power. Read the post-Crucifixion narrative, and note how they needed power—

[1] Luke xxiv. 13–35.

Illumination and Power! The flash of light which would clarify, and so enable them to set in order the tumult of their minds; the Vital Force to make their knowledge effective and serviceable.

Then something happened. The fact that the disciples made any effort at all shows that something happened. In accordance with the psychology of unsuccessful revolutions the disciples had at first dispersed. The indications are that with saddened hearts many of them were about to resume their interrupted toil—had in fact done so. Yet instead of prosecuting their purpose, we find them within a short time gathered in force close to the scene of the great tragedy, not as mourners haunting the last resting-place of their Beloved, but as men whose hearts are filled with a great joy, and whose spirits are keyed up to a great expectancy. 'They were continually in the Temple blessing and praising God.'[1] It is difficult to account for this striking change of mood from the ordinary psychological condition of bitter disappointment to that of confident expectancy. To effect this change, the stimulus must have come from outside themselves. We are left in the dark, unless we accept the account of the post-Resurrection appearances which are recorded in the Gospels. Although we confess to being baffled in the attempt to harmonize the accounts in all their details, they yet convey to the writer's mind an overwhelming impression of truth, and they serve, as nothing else could, to explain the change of mood. It was due to the profound conviction that they, the disciples, had seen their Lord risen from the tomb. But this was not all; within a brief period this confident expectancy was succeeded by one of active, courageous labour—preaching, teaching, organizing, administrating. It is extraordinary and baffling. There is an explanation, the explanation contained in the records; and, if one can

[1] Luke xxiv. 52–3.

accept the supernatural, it is a complete and satisfying answer to our questionings. Just as the Evangelists explain the change of mood as due to intercourse with the Risen Master, so the author of the Acts explains the change from weakness to power, from patient, eager expectancy to fruitful, organic labour, as due to the Presence of the Paraclete. This explanation may be unscientific, but it is given in all good faith by a careful and painstaking historian, St. Luke, who was contemporary with the events he relates, or collates, and was next to being an eyewitness to these happenings. This writer's identity, capacity, and trustworthiness have been severely tested by modern scholarship, and have been thoroughly vindicated.[1] If subsequent events were out of line with St. Luke's narrative we should have to cast about for another explanation, but the ensuing history of the Christian religion makes it a most reasonable explanation—indeed the only one which meets the facts.

Of late years Psychology has given thinking men a new respect for religious experiences, and has banished the old and easy contempt for their effects. It is less difficult to-day to appreciate the careers and teaching of the ancient prophets of Israel and to understand the power and success of Mohammed than it was in the middle of the last century. It is possible that our present inquiry might be illuminated by a comparison between the religious phenomena cited above and that supplied by the little Apostolic society.

The effects of prophetic preaching may be estimated by a study of Old Testament literature where we can trace the gradual development of religious and moral ideas, and their growing hold upon the people. These effects are what might naturally be expected from the earnest preaching of godly men whose authority was generally recognized,

[1] Cf. Plummer, *St. Luke*, Int. Crit. Comm., especially Introduction, i–xxix.

and whose precepts, however uncomfortable and inconvenient, answered to the highest convictions of the race. The main theme of prophetic preaching was the Righteous God, and the need of righteousness in those who worshipped Him. There was nothing creative, nothing even positively constructive about it. Their exhortations pointed to the right road, but gave no power to follow it beyond the power which is derived from example, encouragement, and from the kindling and fanning of a Great Hope.

With the teaching of Islam it was different. On their best side the doctrinal tenets of Mohammed were Hebraic with a slight tincture of Christianity. The system of the Great Prophet was therefore largely derivative. But his appeal, and the appeal of Islam generally, and the grounds of its success, are traceable to the simplicity of the message and to an ethical standard which was not over-exacting. On the other hand, while the 'Thus saith the Lord' of the Hebrew prophet commanded immediate deference, Mohammed undoubtedly had to impress and mould his own environment. He was the first prophet of his cult, not one in an age-long chain of accredited teachers whose links naturally supported one another. He must needs create his own atmosphere, and force the members of his entourage to inhale it. Where he obtained the power to effect his purpose, it is not our present duty to inquire. For myself, I am willing to admit a certain element of the supernatural and to believe that Mohammed possessed a degree of inspiration, since otherwise I cannot account for the power of the man,[1] nor for the fruits of his mission, any more than I can account for the power, and its effects,

[1] Carlyle, *On Heroes and Hero-Worship, The Hero as Prophet.* Margoliouth is very severe: 'Muhammad was taken as the type of a heroic prophet, just as Odin was made the type of a heroic divinity, the author's knowledge of the two personalities being about equal.' Art. 'Muhammad' in *Encyc. Rel. Ethics,* vol. viii, p. 878.

of the ancient prophets, except on the assumption that God spake as He was minded through them. Nevertheless, it is possible to view the origin and growth of Islam as a purely natural phenomenon. Monotheism had long flourished in the world, and the Christian form of it had captured the civilization of the Roman Empire. The worship of One God was nothing new, and a strong personality was perhaps all that was necessary to turn the wild desert tribes of Arabia from their fetishism to a stern and simple faith with a rigid though easily attainable ethical code. Moreover, the fighting instincts of the people were called in to the support of missionary zeal, and Islam was preached with fire and sword. It is a method of propaganda which is easily understood, and, ruthlessly employed, cannot fail of material success.

Does the Apostolic type of power and of result conform to either of these varieties?

Only the beginnings of the Apostolic movement have so far been indicated. Its further progress is of a piece with its first stage. Facing new situations, it developed new powers and personalities adapted to its task. The whole authority of contemporary Judaism, armoured with spiritual pride, conscious that it sat in Moses' seat, early bent its energies to the suppression of 'the new way'. Later on, the majesty and power of the Pagan Empire accepted the rôle of persecutor. The history of Roman Imperialism from the time of Nero onwards to Constantine is intermittently involved with this hopeless struggle (hopeless, that is to say, for the secular authorities), and towards the end of the period it constitutes the main issue. Henceforward, the movements of the finest races of mankind are involved inextricably with the doctrines, the ethics, the customs of the community which commenced its career as a contemptible sect of a despised race. Considered merely on the surface these results are as marvellous

as those secured by Mohammed and his successors; they are infinitely wider, and at the same time more radical and permanent, than those of an Elijah or an Isaiah. The Hebrew prophet brought a peevish and rebellious king to repentance, or awakened the conscience of a people sunk in idolatry and licentiousness; Mohammed obtained permanent, but more or less external, success by force of arms. But these disciples of Jesus were not in the line, or succession, of accredited teachers; the official religious classes were at first passively, then actively, antagonistic to them. They made no appeal to the secular authority, nor did they rely upon the arm of the flesh. Their weapons were purely spiritual; they relied upon the persuasive power of the doctrine which they taught. It is extraordinary that lacking, on the one hand, the authority of the Hebrew prophet, on the other, the material force which Mohammed employed, such a movement as this should have been inaugurated. It is unique in the history of the world that it should have met with triumphant victory.[1] We have noted the inadequacy of the agents of this mission, considered from a secular point of view. Yet we have also observed how they rose to the occasion, and what results flowed from their efforts. It may be assumed then that the Apostolic type of power differed considerably, and differed favourably, from the types with which it has been compared. And the difference may be accounted for, or largely so, by the substance of its message.

[1] The success of Buddhism instantly rises to the mind, but the comparison with Christianity is misleading. The attitude of Christianity to other religious systems is utterly and uncompromisingly exclusive; on the other hand, Buddhism is tolerant and indifferent. It absorbs any form of popular religion, and thus creates the minimum of opposition; 'almost every Chinaman would probably profess himself a believer in the philosophy of Confucius, while he would worship at both Buddhist and Tao temples.' See Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 4; also, as to spread of Buddhism, pp. 212–46.

First of all this new teaching, to permit oneself a paradox, was not new. It was based upon the venerable faith of the Hebrew fathers. The Apostles appealed to the same God as scribes, elders, and doctors of the Jewish orthodoxy. They used the same Scriptures. With the mass of the Seed of Abraham they worshipped in the same Temple, frequented the same synagogues—as yet. They delivered their message as Jews to Jews. So far they differed not from the prophets of old, though of course they lacked the prestige and authority which a long succession of inspired teachers gives to the members of that succession. Already it has been pointed out how prophecy had for generations hidden its head under the cloak of pseudonymity.[1] Its inspiration was belittled; its utterances suspected; its very form and method changed. John of the Desert and the Prophet of Nazareth had revived the office, but the tragic ends of both were fresh in the minds of all. Secular and ecclesiastical authority had apparently proved too strong for vigorous and creative teaching. So it seemed. Yet these men had again opened the gates of the vaults of the dead, and the breezes of heaven were blowing through them. Different as it was from the conventional religion, this new teaching was nevertheless in harmony with the ancient faith. Its exponents appealed to history and to prophecy for the justification and confirmation of what they taught.

Nor was the morality of the new teaching different from the old; different, that is to say, from the best part of it. In some directions the tenets of the Law had been accommodated to the infirmities of the people.[2] 'The traditions of men' had too often given a superficial or external interpretation of the Commandments of God. But the spirit and essence of the Law were of such a kind as to

[1] See sections (above) devoted to Apocalyptic and pseudonymous literature.

[2] Matt. xix. 3; Mark x. 5.

fit the aspirations of the most exalted idealist in the sphere of morality. Everything which was ' honest and of good report ' was in accord with it. The moral enthusiasts of the Old Dispensation felt this instinctively. And the new teachers were not conscious of any deviation from the ancient code, nor could their hearers detect it. The charges levelled against the Galilaeans were never moral. The disciples of Jesus simply applied very thoroughly, and under a new motive, and with fresh intensity, that which they had received from their fathers.

But where the Hope of Israel is involved it is quite different. As I have already endeavoured to show, the Hebrew race was upheld by Promise. This is a truth, well known to many, which is yet constantly forgotten. From St. Paul's eager, fervent words we learn that the Promise is a more precious gift from God, a more fruitful gift, than that of Law. And the Apostles declared that the Promise was fulfilled. This was their distinctive message. Everything new and vital, everything which made their teaching unlike the current teaching, was embraced in the fact that they believed the Promise was fulfilled. To proclaim this, they sacrificed the common interests of their lot, their business, their quiet, peasant-like domesticity, the tranquil happiness of home and friends and neighbourhood. They plunged into the unaccustomed atmosphere of Jerusalem, filled as it was with learned theological and ceremonial controversy. Here their native instincts were ill at ease, and their natural gifts all at sea. These rude provincials willingly and gladly exposed themselves to the contumely and ridicule of the great and learned of their nation. More than that—they staked their lives upon the conviction that the Promise made by Jehovah to their race had been fulfilled. The Messiah had come ; Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Though in the ignorance of unbelief He had been put to death,

yet God had raised him up, and he was now ' by the right hand of God exalted '.[1] In this state of glory and exaltation ' [He] received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost ', and this Spirit He had sent forth into the world, ' For the Promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off . . .' [2] From the tenor of the first Apostolic preaching, and that which succeeded it, we learn that the disciples of Jesus believed that the Gift of the Holy Spirit was embraced in the fulfilment of the Promise.

Thus it was, that while the Apostles declared the Promise fulfilled, the scope of the same was found to be enlarged, defined, and much enriched. Some of the lofty but hazy visions of apocalyptists were here made definite, tangible, and within the reach of all. The extravagances of the imagination disappeared in the presence of the reality. But the essentials of the pictures were there, spiritualized and yet realized. Blessings and privileges which were embraced in the conception of the Kingdom of Heaven, or Kingdom of God, were declared to be not merely imminent but actually present, capable of being accepted and used. The Messianic Age had come, the Hebrew Golden Age, foretold by so many inspired tongues and pens of Israel. Immortality of a kind richer, yet more definite, more personal, than any seer had dreamed of, was now taught as being the inevitable consequence of a firm and heart-felt acceptance of Jesus as Messiah, and the Lord of Glory. Life Eternal revealed in Christ, this was involved in the earliest preaching of the Apostles, though the fulness of its significance was perhaps not immediately present to men whose minds were filled with the conviction that their Lord was risen, and whose hearts were thrilled by the Presence of the Spirit Whom He had sent. In such circumstances people do not realize the full implication of what they say and do. But the Resurrec-

[1] Acts ii. 33. [2] Ib., 39.

tion of Jesus of Nazareth involved His faithful followers in a similar destiny. That this doctrine was present in the teaching of the Twelve, at least in germ, seems to be beyond question. Otherwise, the Pauline theology, of which the Resurrection doctrine forms an essential part, and the Johannine theology, wherein the doctrine of Eternal Life in Christ is the dominant feature, remain entirely inexplicable.

In itself this doctrine of the Fulfilment of Promise suffices to mark off, and set apart as unique, the new teaching delivered as it was with united enthusiasm and authority. We have only to compare the contemporary exegesis of the Pharisaic cult with this bold and comprehensive declaration of fulfilment to note an immense difference, not merely of manner and method, but of tone and spirit. The Jewish Rabbi multiplies sign-posts and gives directions along a road which is already fairly well indicated, and where additional detail merely tends to confuse and oppress the traveller who requires strength and power rather than advice in order to pursue his way. But these new teachers do not point to guide-posts but to a Guide; they do not grope, they see; they do not supply suggestion, or interpret, they inspire; they transmit to the wayfarers not advice, but power. Their convictions are not merely unshakable but ardent, and they pass like an electric current from those who speak to those who hear.

Already we have emphasized the poverty of the Apostles, viewed naturally, for any dynamic purpose. And yet the narrative of the Acts presents them as dynamic personalities who are withal conscious of their power. They do not claim to be great in themselves. The spirit of Simon Magus is not theirs.[1] All which they have they declare they have received, and this most emphatically.

[1] Acts viii. 9–11.

They know that the faith and ethics of the Old Testament are most infallibly true; they know that the Promise of the Old Dispensation has been fulfilled; they offer blessings and new hopes which go immeasurably beyond what conventional interpretation of prophecy assumed that it contained.

How do they know? Whence is their assurance? Whence is their authority? Who gave them this authority? Questions of this sort were asked of their Master. It is right to ask these questions; it is right to test the truth of novel and crucial doctrines. The fault is not in the questions but in the spiritual dullness which makes them necessary, and in the motive which prompts them. The new teachers were filled with a sense of the supernatural origin of their knowledge, assurance, and authority, and the earliest historian of the Church clearly shares this conviction. Every reader of the Book of the Acts must see, to begin with, that the Twelve felt they were promulgating something very real and very vital—not theories but facts, not opinions but truths. They were not philosophers with novel speculations, but men passing on to their brethren convictions which they believed would change the mind and heart of their hearers, as they had changed their own. These convictions involved not merely the mental faculties, but also spiritual aspirations and intuitions, as well as the affections. The message was for the whole man, offering him redemption and release from the moral and spiritual ills which his religion and his conscience alike had recognized, but which they were equally unable to remove. But now everything connoted by the word salvation was offered by these Galilaeans to any who would genuinely accept their teaching. This was nothing abstract or speculative, but something they themselves understood because they had intimately experienced it, something of most precious and

mysterious import. They were proclaiming what they believed to be true from their love for, and faith in, a Friend and Master Who had given them evidences not only of His Love but of His Power. By this propaganda they were sharing with others what they had seen and heard, and their hands had handled of the Word of Life.[1]

That was it. These men had passed through a great experience which had its origin in Jesus Christ, Who though lately removed from their carnal sight, still influenced them, influenced them more profoundly than before —in fact empowered them. This is the witness of the narrative of the Acts, and of the speeches recorded therein. Yet, as we have seen, contemporary Judaism was a spent and exhausted force. Furthermore, there is nothing in these provincials, or in their antecedents, to account for the change. Notwithstanding, their teaching is fresh and powerful, authoritative and creative. It is Jesus, absent in the Flesh but present in the Spirit, Who has effected this transformation.

CHAPTER X

THE FRUITS OF CONTACT

How does it work? That is the question of modern practical philosophy. If its fruits are commensurate with its promise, the thing is good, the thing is true. Now the Vital Force enlivening the material, the leavened meal, the little band of disciples filled with the Holy Spirit— these are synonymous terms—satisfies this test. The insignificant company of some one hundred and twenty souls increased with startling rapidity. The original influx was three thousand and this was constantly augmented.

[1] 1 John i. 1.

Many of the priests of the ancient hierarchy became converts to the new teaching. The general populace was greatly attracted. Meanwhile the Jewish authorities displayed a growing nervousness. They possessed a dread, reasonable enough, that the proclamation of the fulfilment of the Promise in the Person of Jesus Christ would act upon the contemporary order like some explosive chemical, and blow everything to pieces. From this point of view there is much to justify the submission of this revolutionary proclamation to a severe test, and its exponents to rigorous restrictions. Nevertheless the authorities hesitated long before taking the stern measures that were felt to be expedient. There were divided counsels among themselves, and all feared the people among whom the little fellowship was strongly favoured. The counsel of one of the wisest and most influential of the members of the Sanhedrin was 'masterly inactivity'.[1] Censure and mild persecution had no deterrent effect, 'the Church grew and multiplied'.

But the tide of events and their own smouldering prejudices were finally too strong to maintain a *laisser-faire* policy, or even one of gentle repression. The antagonism of the rulers stiffened; passionate resentment broke out over the preaching of a brilliant young Hellenist, Stephen, who was the most gifted of the recent acquisitions of the new propaganda. We are told that he was 'a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost', and that 'full of faith and power' he 'did great wonders and miracles among the people'. Nothing is known of his antecedents, but there is a suggestion of superior culture about him, and being a Greek-speaking Jew, he had facilities for rising out of the racial groove as Philo did. Whether he had liberalizing tendencies before his acceptance of the Gospel message is not known. Certain it is that the new faith created, or gave him, the vehicle for expounding truths

[1] Acts iv. 34–9.

which were alike unanswerable and unpalatable to those who laid undue stress on ' the seed of Abraham ' idea.

Brief though the association of Stephen with the Apostolic fellowship was, it would be difficult to exaggerate its importance. He and his six companions were the first representatives of the Diaspora to receive office in the new society.[1] The Apostolic body was purely Palestinian and Galilaean. Therefore the selection and ordination of these men, albeit merely ' to serve tables ', was in itself a step forward, pregnant with possibilities which soon came to the birth. Henceforth the Twelve relieved of eleemosynary cares were to give themselves ' continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word '.[2] Nothing can be clearer, however, than that in Stephen's case the office furnished opportunity for the employment of powers different in kind from those technically attached to it.[3] With the evident approval of the Twelve he taught and argued for the faith either in addition to, or in substitution of, the strict duties of his office. He certainly preached Apostolic doctrine, but with a difference. The tone of it was polemical, while that of his superiors was declaratory. Furthermore, he recognized implications in the Gospel message which were so far obscure to, or seen but dimly by, the original teachers of the faith. The Vital Force had touched and set on fire the heart of a Jew, the product of an environment, more cultured, more impressionable and adaptable than that of Galilee. The leaven had transformed material which would make the succeeding transformations possible.

It is impossible to state categorically the full substance and trend of Stephen's preaching. The sermon of Acts vii

[1] That they were Hellenists is to be strongly inferred from the narrative which emphasizes the successive stages of development in a Catholic as opposed to a national direction (Acts iv. 36; viii. 2, 4, 5).

[2] Acts vi. 4.

[3] Also Philip, *perhaps* Nicolas (cf. Rev. ii. 6, 15).

is an historical review which was brought to an abrupt close by the violence of its auditors. It was broken off before its full aim and purpose could be disclosed—disclosed at least to us remote in time and spirit, as we are, from the atmosphere of Judea in the first decades of the Christian era. But it was clear to those who heard, men familiar with his manner of discourse on previous occasions, some of whom were now implicated in the accusations brought against him. These, strange to say, were fellow Hellenists whose prejudices hardened as they disputed with him. But 'they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake'.[1] It has been argued that those who had been bred in an environment similar to Stephen 'were as a body eager to disprove the feeling of the native "Hebrews" that they were only half Jews; accordingly teaching which minimized the value of the sacred "customs which Moses had delivered"[2] . . . would cause deep resentment in such circles, in spite of their more liberal attitude to things non-Jewish'.[3] This may well be so, and this complex motive would help to explain later antagonisms, notably that which St. Paul encountered among Hellenistic Jews.

Let us try briefly to reconstruct the character of Stephen's teaching. Our evidence is of two kinds. There is first the nature of the charges brought against him; secondly, the evidence supplied by his own words in the fragment of the sermon reported in the narrative. What do his accusers say? 'This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered to us.'[4] The charge was in the main a true one. St. Stephen

[1] Acts vi. 10.
[2] Ib., vi. 14.
[3] J. Vernon Bartlet, art. 'Stephen' in *Encyc. Brit.* (11th edition).
[4] Acts vi. 13–14.

must have declared the Messianic fulfilment in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, and have pointed out that this fulfilment involved great changes. His accusers were wrong, however, in regarding such a proclamation with censure; they should have hailed it with delight. Their resentment and antagonism is symptomatic of the failure of contemporary Judaism as a whole to accept and have faith in the Promise. Unconsciously they were sceptics at heart, and in despair of the coming glory they clung like drowning men to the customs of their race. If Messiah, the Consolation of Israel, the Desire of Nations, had come they should have anticipated change and progress. The allusion to the Destruction of 'this place' was probably due to a misconstruction of the preacher's words. Probably he did say that, if they rejected God manifest in Jesus, neither 'place' nor 'customs' could save them from the Divine displeasure. No doubt many a Hebrew of that age looked forward apprehensively to a possible destruction of the Temple and final dispersion of the nation. Foreign oppression and internal dissension made this no remote contingency. Now, if it did occur, Stephen would say, the Messiah is greater than the Temple and union with him more blessed than attachment to any earthly place, however holy. No mere scribe could utter words like these, but a man who had been honestly awaiting the redemption of Israel, having been touched by the Power of God, could, if he spoke at all, speak in no other way, dilating upon the fulfilment of Messianic hopes; being interrupted and questioned in the course of his preaching, he would perforce reply in this general sense, and thus would furnish his adversaries with a plausible form of accusation. 'What he actually said we cannot tell with certainty. Doubtless, as in Our Lord's case, there was distortion of real words. It is probable enough that Stephen saw that, sooner or later, the process of fulfilment of the

Law in the spirit must involve its becoming obsolete in the letter, and that the conception of worship involved in this fulfilment must render unmeaning the exclusive sanctity of the Temple.'[1]

And this brings us naturally to the fragment of a sermon which constituted the only defence it was permitted to make. Dr. Hort calls it 'an indirect answer' to his accusers; it was only indirect because it was incomplete. It is the writer's opinion that the attitude of the auditors became so tumultuous and threatening at the moment of the quotation beginning 'Heaven is my throne . . .',[2] that the current of the historical survey was broken, and the defendant saw there was no opportunity to be given him for the orderly and logical development of his theme. Consequently, he was hurried, perhaps by natural impetuosity as well as by external pressure, to an improvised conclusion couched in the form of well-merited invective, 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears . . .'.[3]

St. Stephen was in the true prophetical line, but his heart would never have burned, or his lips found utterance, had he not come within the influence of Jesus. We can imagine him, apart from the Vital Force, groping dimly like Aristobulus or Philo after a unity of Hebrew religion with Greek thought. Less easily, we can see him narrowing his vision and concentrating his attention upon the minutiae of the Law as a learned scribe prominent among the members of his class. But it was the doctrine of the Risen Nazarene which placed him in the rôle of prophet, preaching what timid apocalyptists only dreamed of. To the attentive reader the trend of the interrupted discourse is sufficiently plain. Through all the vicissitudes of Israel's history 'the Most High' is guiding Israel, though constantly frustrated by the people's obstinacy, to a conception of spiritual

[1] F. J. A. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 51.
[2] Acts vii. 49.
[3] Ib., 51 ff.

worship which finds its culmination and explanation in 'the coming of the Righteous One'.[1] But these 'living oracles' delivered by 'the dispensation of angels' have been rejected by a people who in their more primitive state preferred false worship to the true, and always the mechanism, the externals, of religion to its inner spirit. 'Ye do always reject the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? and they killed them which shewed before the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have become betrayers and murderers.'[2] If the typical Jew had been faithful to the Law as he professed to be, he would have made some effort to read its inner meaning and have been prepared to welcome the Person and Office of Him in Whom the ancient Dispensation found its fullest explanation and its crowning glory.

Instead of securing acquittal, Stephen's attempted explanation of his faith simply precipitated matters. The closing scene of the trial was violent and tumultuous, and did not preserve a judicial character. He was dragged forth from the Council and cast outside the gates of the city, where in accordance with the prescribed forms concerning punishment for blasphemy, he was stoned to death. His bearing in the hour of agony and dissolution was in harmony with his brief and brilliant career as a follower of the Nazarene, and he sealed his faith with his blood in such a way as to exert a far-reaching influence

[1] Stephen's teaching is a remarkable exposition of what Jesus Himself implied so often, and said so unmistakably in His conversation with the Samaritan woman (John iv. 21–4). But none of these had been recorded at the time. Either the direct or indirect teaching of the Master was vividly and firmly in the minds of the earliest disciples, even to penetrating its deepest significance, or St. Stephen's spiritual perception saw that which the Fourth Gospel later on so amply justified.

[2] Acts vii. 51–2.

and produce remarkable results. His words and heroic end must have touched a chord in many hearts. How it moved one person, who at the time took a hostile share in the execution, we all know.[1] And though the Pauline teaching is so varied and comprehensive, ranging as it does from deep theological mysteries to dietary regulations, that it would seem to come from no single source, yet the underlying principle of it, sometimes obscured in Rabbinic digressions, was that 'the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life'.[2] This was the truth for which Stephen died. Nor are the effects exhausted with St. Paul. There are strong affinities between the teaching of St. Stephen, as unfolded in the preceding pages as well as elsewhere, and that of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Both deal with rites and Temple worship, both view the Old Dispensation idealistically, both find its interpretation and glory in Jesus 'the Author of eternal salvation'.[3] Furthermore, the attitude of both is Hellenistic, not Palestinian, though catholic in the sense that Paul is catholic. Something loftier, more spiritual, more intellectual than the teaching of the Twelve, or that of the Epistle of St. James. The problem of the Gentiles has not touched either; or as perhaps it would be better stated, has not touched the one, nor fallen within the scope of the other. In fact St. Stephen was the pioneer, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was the consummator, of an intermediate level of development between Christianity as a Jewish sect and Christianity as the world religion. There must be emancipation from the letter before the Spirit can have free action upon the world, and it is in this sense that St. Paul can be regarded as in the line of the first great Christian Hellenist, while the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews 'who is known to God alone', develops and expands in richest detail the true Hellenistic line of

[1] Acts vii. 58; xxii. 19–21. [2] 2 Cor. iii. 6. [3] Heb. v. 9.

thought of the proto-martyr. And all their wealth of power and of germinating thought would have remained barren and unproductive but for the Risen Life of the Son of Man, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER XI

CO-OPERATION OF PALESTINIAN AND HELLENIST

The martyrdom of Stephen was the overture to a general persecution which drove all except the Apostles from the Holy City. No doubt a sense of duty caused them to remain to witness to the faith, but their immunity from injury and slaughter when men of lesser prominence were fleeing for their lives continues to be a matter of surmise. It has already been suggested [1] that the propaganda of the Twelve was declaratory rather than polemical, and hence caused less resentment than the aggressive preaching of Hellenistic converts. Furthermore, it is quite possible, nay, probable, that they had powerful sympathizers among those in authority, who would see that they came to no harm.

Meanwhile, the dispersal of the body of believers tended to the wider dissemination of the new doctrines. 'They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.' [2] To another Hellenist, Philip, a colleague of the martyr Stephen, and one of 'the Seven' recently ordained, was due the evangelization of Samaria.[3] The Master by His preaching and example had prepared the way for this innovation, though he himself had done nothing of an overt kind to remove the barrier which subsisted between the Jew and the hybrid Samaritan. It

[1] p. 89. [2] Acts viii. 4. [3] Ib., viii. 5–13.

was left to a Hellenist to enlarge the scope of the new faith, and to proclaim the good tidings to a people not only hated but despised by the orthodox Jew. In this action we observe the transmuting effects of the religion of Jesus. An unconverted Hellenist would have been as indifferent to the welfare of the Samaritan as his most rigid blood-brother of Palestine. But in this instance we see the Hellenist initiating, and the Palestinian (Galilaean) crowning, a successful effort to embrace the despised people of Samaria within the new fellowship of Jesus Christ. Philip preached and baptized; the representatives of the Twelve, Peter and John, prayed, and imposed their hands upon those who believed, 'and they received the Holy Ghost'.[1] Thus we see, under the subtle power of the Vital Force, Palestinian and Hellenist co-operating in an action which was one of a series driving the Church forward to its destined task of making disciples of all nations. The unconverted Jew of the Dispersion would never have contemplated such action; the unconverted Jew of the Holy Land would never have given his blessing to it if executed by others. As it was, the whole body of believers stood committed to this new departure by the deliberate approval of accredited members of the Apostolic College.

The acceptance and baptism by Philip of the Ethiopian eunuch possess, for our purpose, the same general significance as the Samaritan incident. One who acted so boldly in the case of a whole people was not likely to hesitate about the admittance of a single individual into the Christian society. Yet in one respect his action marks an advance. While the attitude of an orthodox Jew towards a 'proselyte of the gate' was kindly and patronizing, he must perforce be regarded as an uncircumcised Gentile. The Samaritan, though hated and despised, was at least circumcised. It is, therefore, evident that Philip was

[1] Acts viii. 17.

irresistibly guided,[1] I use the word advisedly, to act upon a catholic principle, which up to this time had not been acted upon, the principle that all men irrespective of their race and antecedents are potential members of Christ's Church, and are eligible for admission thereto. Whether the matter was reported to the Twelve, or not, we have no information. If it were, it might have become the subject of inquiry and possibly of discipline had not the foremost of the Twelve endured an experience, and under its influence conducted himself in a manner analogous to that of Philip.

The growth and expansion of the young society is illustrated by the setting of this incident. At Lydda and at Joppa disciples were present in some numbers even before the visit of the Apostle, St. Peter, and his sojourn in the coastal region of Judea increased and strengthened the Church.[2] While on this visitation, St. Peter was moved to proceed to Caesarea and there admit a prominent Gentile and his household into the fellowship of the faith. He did this almost against his will; both his prejudices and innate convictions were violated by what he did. The incident is presented with all the supernatural colouring we have grown accustomed to in our perusal of this earliest history of the Christian religion, and it is indeed difficult to imagine how otherwise the Apostle could have been prevailed upon to abandon not merely the habits of a lifetime but the inherited instincts of his race and religion, and place a new and bewildering interpretation upon the duties of his office, and the functions of the Church of Christ. Although Cornelius and his entourage had affiliations with Jewish faith and practice, they were yet at the most 'God-fearers' or 'proselytes of the gate', and, therefore, uncircumcized Gentiles. We may take it as incontrovertible that the original Twelve began their propaganda with the idea that

[1] Acts viii. 26, 29, 39. [2] Ib., ix. 32–43.

their efforts were to be directed towards a revived and spiritualized Judaism under the leadership of the Risen and Exalted Messiah. If they thought of Gentiles at all, they thought of them as entering the faith of Christ through the portals of Judaism. In other words, a man must become a Jew before he becomes a Christian. Peter's original attitude and the transformation which took place is indicated in the following quotation: 'Ye yourselves know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation; and yet unto me hath God shewed that I should not call any man common or unclean; wherefore I came without gainsaying, when I was sent for.'[1] A little later on there follows that noble and candid confession: 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.'[2] What is to us a truism came to the foremost Apostle like a flash of dazzling light. He could not immediately orientate himself to this new truth, but a further manifestation of the Divine Purpose[3] brought him to the decision which the more adaptable Hellenist, Philip, had previously reached with greater ease. 'And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.'[4] On the Apostle's return to Jerusalem he is called in question for his un-Hebraic conduct, but when he explains how he was irresistibly led forward under supernatural guidance, and how the power of the Holy Ghost displayed indifference to racial barriers, the Palestinian brethren 'held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.'[5]

Though in his personal conduct there are signs of vacillation,[6] St. Peter never deliberately receded from this position to which he had been led. Very soon the question of Gentile admission became acute, as needs it must in view

[1] Acts x. 28–9. [2] Ib., 34–5. [3] Ib., 44 ff.
[4] Ib., 47–8. [5] Ib., xi. 18. [6] Gal. ii. 11.

of the ever-widening development of the Church. Its efforts were no longer confined to Palestine. Already we have followed Philip's preaching in Samaria and on the confines of the desert south of Judea; we have witnessed the admission of a prominent Gentile proselyte and his household to the Church without the formality of Jewish initiation. About this time we also hear that there are disciples at Damascus, the ancient capital of Syria, well outside the borders of the Holy Land.[1] And it is in connexion with them that an event occurs which is of such far-reaching importance that it controls the current of the Christian religion for all time. I refer to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, which will be given consideration as part of the larger subject, Paulinism, at a later stage of this study.[2]

'Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene which when they were come to Antioch spake unto the Greeks also,[3] preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.'[4] Although previous liberalizing efforts had been carried out, shared in, or sanctioned by the authorities in Jerusalem, this present action was on such a large scale and involved such tremendous consequences that Barnabas, a Cypriote of high repute for his self-sacrifice and generosity, was commissioned to investigate. The inquiry became a bene-

[1] Acts ix. 2, 10, 19.

[2] The Second Measure, Cap. X.

[3] In spite of the weighty authority of Dr. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 59–60, I prefer the reading Ἕλληνας, otherwise the point of the narrative seems lost. Hellenists, i. e. Greek-speaking Jews, were already a commonplace in the Church.

[4] Acts xi. 19–21.

diction, 'and much people was added unto the Lord'[1] Barnabas, seeking out the illustrious convert, Saul, remained at Antioch a whole year. The Church became rooted and established, the disciples proudly bore their new name, 'Christian', and the secular capital of Syria, one of the metropolitan cities of the Empire, bade fair to usurp the position of Jerusalem as the centre of the new faith.[2]

Under what was deemed the direct authority and influence of the Holy Spirit, Barnabas and Saul set forth on a missionary journey which was of deepest significance to the Church and its destiny. It is needless for us to follow its course in detail, but we may with advantage to our purpose emphasize one or two features of it. The scope of the journey covered ground familiar to one or other of the leaders of the enterprise; Cyprus to Barnabas; the Cilician and neighbouring regions to Saul. On the occasion of the conversion of Sergius Paulus[3]—we are not told that he was regularly admitted into the Christian society—Saul drops his Hebraic and assumes,[4] never to relinquish it, the name that he possessed as a Roman citizen.[5] It is suggestive of his mission to the world—the Roman Empire was, for all practical purposes, the world of that age—instead of to a single race. So far, however, there was no radical change of procedure but the trend of his policy is clearly seen. The Gospel of Christ is still preached first in the synagogues, a method to which St. Paul adheres more or less consistently throughout his ministry.[6] But he does not consider his mission a failure if it should be rejected by his fellow countrymen. He has a wider public in view, and carries Barnabas with

[1] Acts xi. 24. [2] Ib., 25–30. [3] Pro-consul of Cyprus.
[4] Or rather the narrator does so. [5] Acts xiii. 9.
[6] Even in the last scene of the Apostolic history, St. Paul delivers his message *first* to his fellow countrymen (Acts xxviii. 17–28).

him. 'And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." . . . And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region.'[1] When they reached Lycaonia, a region of rustic heathenism, they preached without scruple to the simple peasantry,[2] and on their return journey through Southern Asia Minor they established Christian communities with sufficient organization, communities which, we have every reason to infer, were compound of Jews (Hellenists) and Gentiles alike, and were independent of, and separate from, the synagogues. Then they laid the matter before the Church in Antioch, rehearsing 'all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith among the Gentiles'.[3] It was a mighty step forward and of tremendous import. How would it be regarded by the conservative elements and by the Mother Church of Jerusalem?

CHAPTER XII

THE CONSERVATIVE STANDPOINT

These questions are answered in the next great section of the narrative.[4] First of all, much uneasiness was displayed; the conservatives took alarm. It was natural that they should. Principles which have become truisms to us were strikingly new to them. The spirit of Christ's teaching is being painfully assimilated by us to-day. It need therefore cause no great surprise that certain fundamentals, such as the freedom and universality of the Gospel, should have been seriously questioned by devout

[1] Acts xiii. 46–9.
[2] Ib., xiv. 6–18.
[3] Ib., xiv. 22–7.
[4] Ib., xv. 1–29.

Christians of the first century, whose atmosphere, breeding, and education had convinced them that salvation could only be obtained by obedience to the Divine Law given to their nation. If not, they might reasonably ask, 'what advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision?'[1] In the attempt to visualize the conditions of that early society, the student is less surprised at intermittent displays of narrowness and spiritual pride than he is at the wonderful vision, power, and vitality of the new society which enabled it to break the fetters of Judaism and become capable of its world-wide task. It was wellnigh smothered in its Jewish cradle, but the evangelic fervour of St. Paul and St. Barnabas, the noble Christ-like charity of St. Peter and St. James, the intelligent, faithful co-operation of the body of believers in Jerusalem, gave the Church of Christ its catholic direction and won for it its first great victory, a victory over the cherished scruples of those who composed it. This was the vital contact of the leaven with the meal. Those men were deeply in earnest who said, 'Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved',[2] and those others also 'of the sect of the Pharisees who believed', who rose up in the very council and said, 'It is needful to circumcise them (the Gentiles), and to charge them to keep the Law of Moses'.[3] And there follows much serious discussion, probably heated discussion, to which Peter, with the spiritual acuteness characteristic of him, gives a new turn by recalling his own experience at Caesarea, and establishing a principle thereon.[4] This is the moment for Paul and Barnabas to give an account of their missionary journey and its wonderful result in the conversion of so many Gentiles. Then after a silence, probably a period of silent and intense prayer, James, the Lord's brother, who seems to occupy the office of Bishop

[1] Rom. iii. 1. [2] Acts xv. 1. [3] Ib., 5. [4] Ib., 7–11.

of Jerusalem [1] and president of the Council, gives weighty judgement like one in authority, that the Gentiles should be left unmolested in their new monotheism brought about by the preaching of Christ. There is to be no submission to a painful, and to many Gentile minds, degrading mutilation, no keeping of Sabbaths, none of the many prohibitions and abstinences enjoined upon the sons of Israel. None of these burdens which constituted 'the Yoke which', Peter frankly confessed, 'neither our fathers nor we were able to bear',[2] but four simple restrictions, two of which we recognize as being implied in the renunciation made by every disciple of Christ at his baptism; the other two, probably a concession to the Judaic element in the Church, though not conforming very closely to any known code of prohibitions. However that may be, the latter pair of restrictions, that in regard to 'things strangled' and to 'blood', seems never to have been enjoined [3] except upon the communities immediately addressed at Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia,[4] and even there these injunctions probably had only temporary recognition, as we never hear of them again.

Thus the battle was won for the catholicity of the Church, or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, the decisive battle of the campaign was won, since there remained much sullen hostility to the principles laid down at the Council of Jerusalem, hostility which ever and anon burst into flame and became the chief obstacle confronting

[1] So Lightfoot and Gore. See *Christian Ministry*, p. 116.

[2] Acts xv. 10.

[3] Nevertheless, many Christians have exhibited a rooted objection to animal blood as an article of food. This is illustrated by Min. Felix, who says, incidentally, 'we do not even touch the blood of eatable animals in (our) food', xxx. 6 (quoted by Cadoux, *Early Christian attitude to War*, p. 128).

[4] But for an interesting and valuable discussion of the subject, see Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 68–76.

St. Paul in his mission to the Gentiles. Nevertheless the leaders of the Church, with the whole body of believers consenting, had adopted the principle of freedom. The Jewish Law including the initiatory rite of circumcision was not to be imposed upon Gentiles who embraced the faith. And whatever individual members, or even parties, in the Church might say or do, there could be no recantation, no withdrawal from a principle, involving a grand policy, to which the Christian Society in the very citadel of conservatism, with its most unbending and orthodox members giving voluntary assent, had deliberately committed itself under the most solemn and impressive circumstances. The leaven was leavening the lump very effectively.

Of the Palestinian leaders of the Church but little more is definitely known,[1] though there is considerable tradition, especially in the case of St. Peter. We are not concerned here with the controversies connected with the latter, but it is probable that he sojourned and taught both at Antioch [2] and Rome. The theory that the substance of his message is contained in the Marcan Gospel seems fairly well established. If we accept the Petrine authorship of the first epistle of that name—and there is as much to be said for as against its authenticity—we find the similarity of language and thought between St. Peter and St. Paul very marked, and the circumstance suggests that the powerful and creative mind of the latter had sub-consciously influenced that of his simpler and less learned brother Apostle, without, however, impairing the individuality and distinction of his message. Furthermore, if we accept the address of the epistle as metaphorical, 'the sojourners of the Dispersion',[3] referring to Christians

[1] But see Acts xxi. 17 ff., where there is no mention of the Apostles.

[2] Certainly at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11 ff.).

[3] 1 Pet. i. 1 (R.V.), viewing them as scattered members of 'the spiritual Israel'.

scattered about in heathen neighbourhoods rather than to Jewish Christians exclusively, evidence is immediately to our hand of the thorough-going character of St. Peter's acceptance of the principle recognized at Jerusalem, and of the results of its application. He writes to these uncircumcised Gentiles with a warmth of sympathy and appreciation of their spiritual dignity, which could only come from a heart that had outgrown the narrow instincts, habits, and precepts of race and environment. 'Ye are an elect race', he says, 'a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for (God's) own possession . . . who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.'[1] Simon Peter has travelled far from the days when he longed to found the Kingdom of his Master with a sword stained with the blood of the enemies of the Israel of God.[2]

The Epistle of James presents us with one of the most interesting problems of the New Testament. Who was its author? to whom was it addressed? Is it anti-Pauline, or merely ante-Pauline? Is it very early, or is it very late? These and other questions are constantly being asked and never receive completely convincing answers. If it be the work of James 'the Lord's brother', it supplies us at once with the preoccupation of one who held a unique and distinguished position in the Christian Church of the earliest age; if it be not, it still remains the work of one who lived in the circle of the Synoptic tradition, and was chiefly concerned with the ethics of the Gospel, not with its theology. It has the gravity, the aphoristic solemnity, of the old Wisdom Literature, but it has more; it has imbibed something of the freshness, originality, and

[1] Ib., ii. 9–10 (R.V.).

[2] John xviii. 10; also Matt. xxvi. 51; Mark xiv. 47; Luke xxii. 49–50.

vitality of the maxims of the Son of Man. With humanitarian and social interests uppermost, it shows that the Church of the first century 'delivered its soul' not only in regard to eternal verities, but also had concern for conduct and for daily life. Personally I should wish to look upon this writing, as a homily rather than a letter, as the product of the mind of James, properly called 'the Just', who turns away from all the heated controversy of the day concerning the Law and the Gospel, Jew and Gentile, and applies the moral teaching of Jesus to social conditions and to a spiritual temper developing in the Church, which seems to him entirely out of keeping with the mind of Christ. Thus had the Evangel of Jesus, and the spiritual power consequent upon it, transformed a Pharisaic Jew into a moral reformer whose morality is the fruit of his religion, or the necessary application of it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MULTITUDE OF THE FAITHFUL

Let us now consider the effects of the new movement upon the masses of those who were drawn into it. I use the word, masses, advisedly, for I am convinced that a considerable proportion of the Jewish race, both in Palestine and throughout the Empire, became obedient to the faith.[1] Doubtless many individuals lapsed, especially during the Judaistic controversy, but there would be a certain influx into the Church, though probably a decreasing one, which would serve to make up for such defections. At first there would be no consciousness of a divided allegiance. The Christian society during its first period was a sort of *imperium in imperio*. Like their fellow

[1] For a rather different view, see H. F. Hamilton, *The People of God*, vol. ii, p. 40: 'The believing Jews are but a small minority.'

Jews, the followers of the Nazarene frequented the Temple, observed the Law, participated in the activities of the synagogue. What differentiated the two elements was their attitude towards the age-long Promise. The one still looked forward to fulfilment, or had ceased to care about it; the other joyfully maintained that the fulfilment had been completely realized in the Person and Mission of Jesus of Nazareth. The small company of one hundred and twenty souls[1] became conscious of a life, an organic life, in which all believers participated, and unbelievers did not share. This realization of a life intense among themselves, as based upon their common union with their Master, has a date assigned to it by the first Christian historian. It is the festival of Pentecost after the Passover during which Jesus had been crucified. The first accession of converts shared this realization; 'And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.'[2] Fresh bodies of converts accepted the same principles and followed the same practices. A sort of non-compulsory communism also seems to have characterized the new society. And all this served to strengthen the inner spiritual bond, while it tended to distinguish, and finally to separate, the Christian from the unbelieving Jew. Repression developing into persecution, the martyrdom of loved and respected leaders, a gradual awakening to the world-wide mission of the Church under the pressure of disputes about the necessity of circumcision and the relation of the Mosaic Law to the Gospel, the admission of individual Gentiles, and then of bodies of Gentile converts, produced a cumulative effect which finally divorced Christianity

[1] There were, however, other believers, especially in Northern Palestine—1 Cor. xv. 6; Matt. xxviii. 16–20, may refer to the same event, but identification is doubtful.

[2] Acts ii. 42 (R.V.).

from Judaism.[1] Meanwhile it was into a sacred fellowship the converted were admitted, and the admission was always by one rite, one which the Lord Himself had provided as a definite means of incorporation. It was baptism by water, with a prescribed formula.[2] Moreover, the data which have come down to us from apostolic times make it clear that Baptism was regarded as a Sacrament, or mystery, admitting the candidate, among other benefits, into a Divine Society.[3]

Besides the rite of incorporation, there is one of continuance which is constantly referred to, but in that casual and incidental way in which mention is generally made of the habitual things of life. This is 'the breaking of bread'.[4] It is not necessary to labour the point of the identification of the institution with the Holy Eucharist, or Mass, or Lord's Supper of to-day. It is essentially the same rite, and except in the case of Baptism, there is no more unbroken tradition than that which testifies to the nature and importance of this Mystery or Sacrament of communion and fellowship. Nor was this rite evolved by the visible leaders of the new society to meet emergencies, nor was it a device created on the spot to keep the disciples united on an ordinary worldly basis, but it was, so they believed, a solemn and supernatural ordinance, instituted by their Lord,[5] Whom they regarded as Divine, to be a means of sustaining and enriching the common life, as well as the personal life of the believer, by the impartation of

[1] Lechler, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, vol. i, p. 47.

[2] Matt. xxviii. 19, but Philip in baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch was apparently content with less if Acts viii. 37 is accepted; see also Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i, p. 6; also Acts xix. 5. Cf. art. 'Baptism' in *Dict. of Bible* (Hastings), vol. i, p. 241.

[3] Ib., p. 243.

[4] As to the relation of Eucharist and Agape, Lechler is interesting, *Apos. Times*, vol. i, p. 46.

[5] Mark xiv. 22–5; Matt. xxvi. 26–9; Luke xxii. 14–20; 1 Cor. x. 14–21; xi. 17–34.

Life and Strength from Him. It was also a commemorative sacrifice, by its dramatic action vividly recalling to believers the great Sacrifice on Calvary at the moment when they were receiving the gifts of spiritual sustenance and refreshment.[1] Thus they cemented the union with Christ begun in baptism, and were also drawn closer to their common Head.

I have dwelt upon these two features of the Apostolic fellowship because they belong to its very texture, not because there are no others which might be considered. Moreover, Baptism and the Eucharist did more than anything else to cause the members of the Church to realize a life shared with their brethren, and apart from those who did not acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. A spirit of joy, kindliness, and mutual sacrifice seems to have animated the early disciples. They possessed a new vigour and a new courage. There was a readiness to endure persecution for ' the Name '. There was a glad and willing adherence to leaders and a ready obedience to the same, where obedience was not a burden, but the portion of love. Prayer and praise were the spontaneous outpouring of thankful hearts, the happy exercise of souls conscious of God's Love and Goodness. Intercession was the constant occupation of men and women whose blessings made them eager for the blessing of others less fortunate than themselves. Missionary enthusiasm was not confined to the Twelve, but pervaded the whole body. And there was an elasticity and adaptability about it which welcomed proselytes, first Samaritans, then Gentiles, into the Body of Christ. Above all there was a spiritual exaltation, a leaping vitality and power, which had its source in the Ascended Christ Who had poured upon the disciples the Holy Spirit. Under this holy influence they forgot lesser things, or outgrew them—racial pride, racial

[1] Gore, *Church and the Ministry*, p. 207 n.

prejudice, racial privileges, 'the traditions of men', and the rite of circumcision. What were all these to the great New Thing which had happened in these latter days?—a Thing which filled the heart with life and love, which clarified clouded minds with fresh convictions, which obliterated barriers, and removed mountains.

Here we have some of the points which differentiated the Jew who accepted Jesus as the Christ, and the Jew who did not. And it was all the difference in the world; it was the difference between life and death.

PART II

THE SECOND MEASURE: THE GREEK

CHAPTER I

THE OLD GODS

If the effect of the leaven upon the Hebrew was life from the dead, the effect upon the Hellenized world was equally wonderful.

Greek art, language, literature, and thought had become diffused and, being diffused, had lost strength, beauty, and purity. While enriching the world, the Hellene had impoverished himself. This would not have been so if the spring of racial life had remained fresh and vigorous. But for some reason or other it was drying up. The world was busy assimilating Greek ideas and drinking eagerly from the reservoir of Grecian culture, but little was flowing into it. After the Macedonian conquests the pure Hellene contributed a dwindling stream of thought and artistry to the world. Indeed, it would seem that most of his energies were absorbed in the imitation and interpretation of the masterpieces of his race for the benefit of Syrian and Egyptian, Persian and Roman. It was easier to explain than to create, and so he was content for the most part to be the world's dragoman of the glories of his race. A noble office in itself, for no people has ever made so large and rich a contribution to the intellectual progress of mankind as the little people whom in the beginning of the historic period we find spread thinly round the Aegean Sea, concentrated in the Peloponnesus, and on the shores which face it

from the north.[1] To make this contribution accessible, to explain it, to popularize it, were, generally speaking, the functions of the later Greeks, and such functions were only second in value and importance to the original creative faculty itself.

It would be well for us, perhaps, to pause a moment and make an effort to realize this contribution, not in its fulness —that would be an impossible and presumptuous task, not merely for the present writer but for almost any one—but sufficiently to give some idea of the interaction between it and the Power which had its earthly original in Palestine and was transmitted to it through the medium of the Hellenistic Jew.

Of course the Greek of the Heroic Age is childlike, whether as depicted in the Homeric poems from the view-point of the ruling classes, or as he is described in the poetry of Hesiod from the view-point of the peasantry. However much these magnificent literary survivals of Hellas in its childhood have been worked up, elaborated, modified, and interpolated by successive Rhapsodists and Gnomic writers, they present to us as true a picture of early days as the books of Judges and Samuel present to us in a somewhat parallel stage of national development among the Hebrews. No one contends that the Homeric and the Hesiodic cycles of poetry were contemporaneous, but they throw light upon what in these remote modern days may be regarded not as two but as a single stage of development.[2] And whether we look at this stage from the side of prosperous chief, or suffering churl, we discern the same simplicity, the same fresh, engaging candour, the same quaint, misdirected, unavailing piety.

In the Homeric Age the gods are very near to men. They have human sympathies and human antipathies. They quarrel and fight among themselves; they love in the

[1] The Grecian mainland.

[2] Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece*, pp. 65–76.

human way, and their love is frequently on the lowest physical plane. They are quite as jealous, intriguing, and scandalous as the humans with whom they interfere and with whom they take sides, for or against. The war around the walls of Ilium originated in the spitefulness of goddesses, and throughout was complicated by divine intervention. The tedious and perilous wanderings of Odysseus were necessitated and extended at the will of divine beings whose motives were human and even puerile. In fact the declaration put into the mouth of Heraclitus by the satirical Lucian expresses the Homeric view with great appropriateness and brevity. 'What are men? Mortal gods? What are gods? Immortal men?'[1] Pre-eminent ability in some department, or some super-excellent quality—power, wisdom, beauty, eloquence, added to the gift of immortality—alone distinguished gods and men. There is none of the aloofness, the mystery, and the awe to which we are accustomed in Hebraic conceptions of deity. The Hebrew reverently accepts a revelation; the Hellene joyously sets out upon discovery.

The religion of the Greek was his own creation, the product of his restless mental curiosity, his vivid imagination, and his artistic faculty. Confronted by the inexplicable, he explained it by a god; as mysteries multiplied, he solved them with the Pantheon. His innate sense of harmony suggested due gradation, priority, subordination—all the principles of social order which he found essential to human life. And as human life was disturbed by faction and intrigue, so his imagination transferred to Olympus conditions and characteristics which made his own course less tranquil but more interesting. Every element in nature as it presented itself to his consciousness, every human quality and passion, were presided over by some immortal being. Life and light, sun and mountain, river

[1] Lucian, *Vitarum auctio*, § 14.

and plain, were objects of friendly reverence because of the deities who animated or controlled them. The powers of reproduction and of growth, of health and of disease, of death and of the shadowy realms beyond the grave, are in the hands of the gods.

And yet through all this multitudinous variety of deification there was a seeking after unity. It was not a search imposed from without by some authoritative oracle, or directed by the sacred pages of some record of revelation, like the Vedas and Upanishads. The Greek found the impulse imposed upon him by his own mental and spiritual constitution. He could never rest satisfied with mental chaos and confusion. Indeed the early poetry, Homeric and Hesiodic alike, is an effort not merely to present current religious beliefs, but to co-ordinate, harmonize, and interpret them. If when concerned in human affairs one god thwarts another, appeal is had to 'aegis-bearing Zeus', 'the Father of gods and men'; sometimes pictured for us as an easy-going voluptuary; occasionally as a just and austere dispenser of judgement, remote and majestic. The incongruity of character did not startle or bewilder either the early poets or their audience. Moral problems did not worry them, and when later on they did, it was not the poet pure and simple who originally contributed moral ideas, though he made use of them when supplied, but the philosophers. Yet it was Zeus in his more inaccessible and austere phases who contributed to spiritual and moral progress, and it was upon these loftier attributes that philosophers fastened when they selected Zeus, the All-Father, as the object of their devout imagination, closely approximating to Monotheism as indicated by the magnificent 'Hymn of Cleanthes'. This, however, was almost at the close not at the commencement of development.

Now, although the gods were all-powerful, *θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα*

δύνανται,[1] to the Greeks of the earliest historical period, the idea of power was a lofty generality. In a concrete and practical way they were not completely so. Gods and men alike were hedged about by Necessity and Fate. 'Oh, woe is me,' Zeus laments, 'for that *it is fated* that Sarpedon, the best beloved of men to me, shall be subdued under Patrokles son of Menoitios.'[2] Among the poets, and these were the early religious teachers of Greece, the conception of Ἀνάγκη developed very rapidly, and served to explain, or at least temporarily account for, the tragedies of human life and those insoluble riddles of existence which the current conceptions of deity did not permit to be attributed to the gods. At a later age the philosophers, seeking for a metaphysical unity, gathered up the ideas of Destiny, Fate, and all-pervading Purpose, unknown and unknowable to man, lying loosely about in poetic form, and in the thoughts and convictions of the vulgar, and joined them to the sublimer presentations of Zeus; and made of him something approaching the One Holy Deity, the Object of the reverence and worship of the monotheist. But as the philosophers elevated Zeus, they depersonalized him. Draining off the anthropomorphic qualities which warmed and enlivened the descriptions of the poets, they reduced the Father of gods and men to a mere abstraction, or, like the Stoics, to a subtle, permeating Essence of the Universe. And however possible it may be for the human mind to conceive an abstraction, or an essence, it is impossible for the heart to worship it.

So far, however, the poets are the teachers of Greece, and so far we are secure from abstractions. But the poetry of the strictly historical period, which we have now reached, is entirely unlike in form, in subject-matter, and in spirit to the poetry of the Heroic Age. In form it is fragmentary and fugitive. It consists of odes and songs—love-songs and drinking-songs—elegies, political and didactic poems. The

[1] *Od.* x. 306.

[2] Ib., xvi. 438 f. (Lang).

material at our disposal is tantalizingly meagre in view of the extent of time covered and the importance of the epoch. Because of the dominant type of the survivals this is called the Lyric Age. The subject-matter is contemporary social and political life, or else it is purely personal and emotional, like the amatory lays of Sappho and Archilochus. As different as possible is this from the chief concern of Homer, and of Hesiod, which is that of chanting the glories of past times. The poets of the Lyric Age are frankly modern and up to date. And the spirit has changed also with form and subject-matter. It is practical and realistic, occupied with everyday matters—the love, the passions, the intrigues, the civic games, the banquets, the life of the various little commonwealths surrounding the Aegean, or upon the many fertile and thickly populated islands of the brilliant sea. The poets of that time had neither the leisure nor the inclination to describe at Homeric length the factions and the intrigues of the celestial state. They were busied overmuch with the discord and clash of parties in their own little communities. That was exciting enough.

It does not, however, follow from what has been said that the Lyric Age was an irreligious, or non-religious, one. Far from it. In most respects it marks a distinct advance upon the age which preceded it. If the gods are not so close to men, they are more entitled to reverence; if they are not so vivid they are not so conspicuous by human frailty. It is not that the poets of the period were more moral than their predecessors, or depicted a more moral condition of society. There are some who claim that there was a marked declension in morals and in manners during the interval, if there was an interval.[1] There was remarkable freedom in the relation between men and women, and the latter occupied a distinguished place in the social life of Lesbos

[1] Some maintain that the poems of the Heroic Age received their literary form in the historic period.

and Mitylene. But freedom does not necessarily connote laxity, else the liberties won by women in England and America would indicate a lower moral condition than that which obtains in southern Europe. Such a thesis could not be seriously defended. However that may be, there appears a growing tendency to remove human vices from Olympus. There was still a firm belief in the gods; and the Greek with his quickness to detect ugliness and incongruity would, as soon as he issued from the stage of intellectual childhood, at once feel the absurdity of appealing for guidance to beings who, though more powerful, were even more lawless and licentious than himself. The Greek has begun to apply his reason to his religious ideas and fancies, and a growing moral sense creates a demand that the ethics of Olympus should not violate the conscience of weak and imperfect humanity. This revolt from the religious ideas of the earlier generation is not everywhere evident, and it is less evident in some quarters than in others, and in some writers than in others, yet I think it may safely be regarded as one of the 'notes' of the age. It is Professor James Adam in his illuminating work, *Religious Teachers of Greece*,[1] who points out that the surviving 'fragments of Greek elegiac poetry seldom or never impute the grosser immoralities to the gods'. There is nevertheless an oft-expressed complaint, a complaint seldom voiced by Homer and Hesiod, that man gets very little practical guidance from the gods. The Greeks have very rapidly approached the parallel pessimism of Job and the Wisdom writers which is so unlike the confident assertion of the earlier psalmist, 'Yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.'[2] To illustrate this we may cite Solon's *πάντῃ δ'ἀθανάτων ἀφανὴς νόος ἀνθρώποισιν*;[3] and Theognis exclaims, 'All our thoughts

[1] p. 89. [2] Ps. xxxvii. 25 (Pr. Bk. Ver.).
[3] Quoted Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece*, p. 93.

are vain, and we have no knowledge: but the gods accomplish all according to their will.'

Especially worthy of note at this period is the tendency to concentrate upon and enhance the power and majesty of Zeus. The great Pindar, evidently under pressure from the critics, and even foes of the Homeric religion, pares down and softens the grosser elements of the ancient mythology while elaborately defending its general character. Although we hear frequently of gods, yet the figure of Zeus grows at the expense of inferior deities. The power of Olympus both in nature and in human life is more and more restricted to the Μεγιστοπάτωρ, the All-Ruler, the mighty Zeus. No longer to any great extent are there divided counsels in the supernatural realm. The lesser gods co-operate with their Over-lord and support his purposes. The office of μοῖρα, Fate, and of αἶσα Διός, is puzzling because of its variableness, but there is a growing tendency to make Fate and Destiny not above, or independent of, the will of Zeus, or of the gods collectively, but rather subject to him and to them. If it were not too abstract an idea for the age it might almost be said that Fate and Destiny were looked upon as the laws and principles upon which Zeus regulated the affairs of men. As Zeus was elevated in dignity and raised in power, so he seemed to divest himself of the vices of mankind. And although the moral law derived its sanctions from the ordinances of Zeus, and not necessarily from his personal example, the lessened stress upon his frailties suggest that it was becoming recognized that moral beauty should be one of the attributes of Universal Power.

In the Homeric poems there is little sustained reflection. They are sheer poetry. Imagination, dramatic power, descriptive power, the art of story-telling, the sense of grandeur, a sympathy with men and beasts, a love of nature like the love which a child has, evading thought and

shunning analysis. Only the other day I read some astonishing statements by a novelist of culture and of parts flourishing in the mid-Victorian period.[1] He was bold enough to assert that the love of nature was a development of the last four centuries. Why the Homeric poems, to speak of none nearer our own day, are full of the love of nature, and the dullest undergraduate comes somewhat beneath the spell, albeit hampered by the junk and apparatus of the schools. The gleaming sands of the sea-shore, the brilliant sun of the Eastern Mediterranean, the water lapping around the sterns of the Grecian fleet, the glory of living in such scenes, are all wonderfully depicted. The beauty of nature, as well as the beauty of Nausicaa, urges the wandering Odysseus to tarry on those far-off shores. The field of Elysium, where the shades of fallen heroes roam, is composed of the glorified beauties of earthly scenes. They remain fixed in the memory because described with the freshness and abandon of childhood. It is the child who feels the glory and mystery of nature and, because he feels it, peoples it with fairies and with goblins; so the ancient Greek, with the gift of expression but the heart of a child,[2] fills his world with gods and goddesses, nymphs and dryads, who are for him the interpretation of what he sees. It is only later with self-conscious effort we re-learn to love that in which without effort we bathed ourselves in childhood. This, I fancy, illustrates sufficiently the difference between the nature-love of, let us say, the early nineteenth-century poets and the nature-love of the Homeric cycle. This is, however, by the way.

In the Hesiodic poems we can trace not only a spirit of inquiry but also of reflection. The poet is becoming

[1] James Payn.

[2] What the Egyptian priest said to Solon is still more true of the earlier age: 'You, Hellenes, are always children.' Plato, *Timaeus*, 22 B.

a philosopher.[1] The Gnomic poets of the so-called Lyric Age continue and develop this philosophic vein, though so far they are more moralists than metaphysicians.

The habit of reflection which we are now considering was stimulated and sustained by philosophers who during this period first appear above the surface of Greek life, and exercise immediately an influence which is never relinquished. And it is from Greek philosophy that the world has inherited some of the finest instruments of thought, of culture and of civilization, and a spirit which is, let us hope, imperishable—*the spirit of free, rational inquiry*. The first sages were no doubt largely unconscious of sitting in the seat of the scornful and conducted their investigations without any animus against, or even criticism of, the prevailing religious beliefs. Their interests were mainly physical. They were scientists, in the English [2] sense of the term, without the equipment and apparatus of their modern successors, employing in place of the means of exact experiment the (almost) unaided powers of their minds. And they made some remarkably shrewd conjectures. Yet it is not to be supposed that they formally challenged the current theology. Whatever of a religious nature they are credited with saying, while doubtless setting in motion dangerous trains of thought, would not necessarily be regarded as heterodox even by themselves. Moreover, such statements were *obiter dicta*, and not to be taken as part of their systems.

Nevertheless, in all these inquiries the early philosophers were seeking for a unity, and they were seeking for it not in conjunction with the recognized teachers of religion but independently of them. Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes, all conceived the universe as derived from one 'self-sufficient cause, both uncreated and imperishable, at

[1] Itself a mark of later development.
[2] In contrast to the German.

once material and spiritual, or rather, let us say, possessed of life ; and, in the second place, there is a disposition to identify this cause with God '.[1] This was directly contrary to the current polytheism which instinctively found a new god for every new phenomenon, though it might easily, and perhaps often was, accommodated to the popular mythology by the identification of Pallas Athene, Hermes, and the rest, with spiritual powers deriving force, and being dependent upon, the original self-sufficing cause. The data at our disposal, however, are too uncertain and conjectural for us to dogmatize,[2] although it is quite safe to say that ' Greek philosophy contained from the first some elements which were bound to bring it into conflict with Greek polytheism, and which were at the same time capable of developing into a more comprehensive and profound theology than anything the so-called " Bible of the Greeks "[3] provided '.[4] And it is in the next stage that the conflict begins.

Nor was the struggle ever doubtful, though long. The acute Greek mind became alive to the absurdities, inconsistencies, and immoralities of the old mythology, and the result, so I think, is to be seen as early as the Lyric Age. There is a distinct advance in the spiritual and moral conceptions of supernatural beings, and there is a gradual elimination of lesser deities. This process is to be noted not merely among Gnomic poets, where one would naturally look for it, but even in Pindar, who may be regarded as a sort of poet laureate of the official Greek religion. And the advance may fairly be credited to the spread of philosophic ideas although there is another influence making itself felt which comes in for reference here, though on

[1] Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 189–90.

[2] M. Bovet, an eminent French authority, declares positively that no idea of a single personal First Cause occurred to any one before Plato.

[3] The Homeric poems. [4] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 190.

account of its importance it will have to be dealt with *in extenso* at a later stage.

Philosophy seems to have affected Pindar adversely, and though he yielded to its influence, he probably did so unconsciously. The acceptance of views connected with the great mystery-cult which bears the name of Orpheus was probably more conscious and deliberate. One clever and plausible writer claims Orpheus as an historical character, 'A real man, a mighty singer, a prophet and teacher, bringing with him a new religion, seeking to reform an old one.'[1] Pindar, and with him probably other poets, enriches and elevates his religious ideas by borrowing from Orphism what was lacking in the old mythology. For instance, a distinctive feature of Orphic belief is the divine origin of man and his kinship with the gods. Pindar exclaims, 'One is the race of men and gods and from one mother we both derive the breath of life'; and yet constantly he warns, 'Seek not to be as Zeus,' 'Seek not to become a god,' 'θνατὰ θνατοῖσιν πρέπει.' The inconsistency is natural in a man both by birth and office, a conservative, an upholder of the old traditions who is yet conscious of new, and powerful, religious currents stirring his world of which he appreciates in part the truth and in part the danger. To accept a celestial origin is consolatory and gratifying to poor mortals; to strive for a return to the celestial state is presumptuous and might well incur the vengeance of outraged deity.

The Mystery Religions of ancient Greece have until recently received but scant notice from classical scholars. And the reason for the negligence is not far to seek. The materials for arriving at a proper understanding and a just conclusion about them lay by no means on the surface of Greek life. Side by side, in Greece, with the religion which

[1] Miss Harrison, cited by Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, pp. 10–11.

was openly professed and with the religious rites that were practised in the temples, not in antagonism with them, but intensifying their better elements and elaborating their ritual, were the splendid rites which were known as the ' Mysteries '. Observe, they were not ' openly professed '. The votaries of Orpheus, Demeter, and Dionysus were really members of secret societies bound together by a mystic rite of initiation and succeeding rites. Their esoteric doctrines could not be divulged except at the risk of severe penalties which it is doubtful whether any one ever had the temerity to incur. Consequently, though allusions to Orphism, to the Eleusinian Mysteries, and kindred cults are fairly common, especially in Plato, no exhaustive treatment of their teaching *from the inside* can be expected. It is not, therefore, surprising that modern scholars should discount the influence of tendencies which were generally referred to, but not dealt with at length, and about which they could learn nothing certain. It is easy to dismiss as unimportant that which is presented to us in a dubious and shifting light. Thus it is with Dr. Mahaffy in his most attractive book, *Social Life in Greece*. He is contrasting modern religion with the religion of Hellas: ' I think the first contrast that strikes us . . . is the *love of mystery* in our modern religions, and its absence, or at least its rare appearance in the religion of the Greeks . . . we stand in the presence of two mental conditions totally and thoroughly opposed. *The one got rid of all Mystery*, and made all things plain. The other adored mystery as such . . . and made all things abstract and difficult.' [1] Later on our author makes us aware of his cognizance of ' those religious Mysteries of which we hear so much but know so little '.[2]

Since the publication of Mahaffy's book,[3] however, sufficient material has been unearthed almost to revolu-

[1] Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece*, p. 374.
[2] Ib., p. 376.
[3] 1877.

tionize the modern view of Greek religion and culture, and to cause many of us to believe that the significance of the Mysteries is second only to philosophy in its influence not only upon Greek life but upon the Graeco-Roman, and the Christian, civilization which grew out of it.

From what has already been said it becomes quite clear that the old Homeric faith was subjected to a double assault. One, from the awakening of the critical faculty stimulated by philosophical inquiry and appealing to the mind; the other, from the kindling of spiritual aspirations and longings fanned by mystic rites and appealing to the conscience, will, and emotions of those who participated in them. Neither tendency at the outset was deliberately opposed to the old system. For instance, many philosophers professed a fondness for the old religion and were happy in making use of the mythology of Homer and Hesiod in their discussions, twisting and turning its nomenclature and phraseology to suit themselves, allegorizing this and rationalizing that, reading into the child-like faith of the ancient poets ideas which were removed from them by centuries of time and mental progress. Later philosophers, indeed, applied to the ancient literature a method of allegorical interpretation which was quite foreign to its subject-matter, a method which was more reasonably employed by Philo upon the Mosaic literature, where an application of the method better suited the contents. Even there, the results were often puerile and unconvincing. Other thinkers were not, however, so conciliatory, and even Plato fell in with the fashion of decrying the ancient gods which seems to have begun with Xenophanes. As I have already pointed out, the earliest sages, Thales and others, were not apparently conscious of any antagonism between their views and those of the accredited exponents of the old religion. But Xenophanes comes out frankly against the Olympic faith and seems to have spent his life in bitter attacks upon it,

and upon the degeneracy of his contemporaries which he attributes to their false theological and moral ideas. That he lived so long,[1] and so comfortably, in the midst of a society against whose faith and manners he bitterly inveighed, speaks well for the tolerant spirit of Greek life, which broke down, so far as we know, on one or two occasions only [2] throughout the centuries of its progress. Xenophanes objects to the orthodox faith on the grounds that it represents the gods (1) as immoral beings ; (2) as in the likeness of men. As regards (1) he says, for example, that the ancient poets ' recounted many lawless deeds of gods, theft and adultery and mutual deception '. As regards (2) he says ' mortals think that gods are begotten and have dress and voice and form like their own ', and again, ' the Ethiopians represent their gods as flat nosed and black ; the Thracians say theirs have blue eyes and red hair.' He seems to realize that these attributions are natural in the childhood of the race but that men should outgrow such fancies.

What does he offer in their place ? He offers thoughts which are astonishingly advanced and mature. He declares the Power and Majesty of God in terms which would excite no comment if found in the Old Testament. Some utterances of the Psalms are more anthropomorphic and less monotheistic [3] than the following fragments from the old sage : (1) ' One God, greatest among both gods and men, resembling mortals neither in form nor in thought.' [4] (2) ' He (God) is all eye, all thought, all hearing.' (3) ' Ever more doth He abide in the same place, moving not at all ; nor doth it beseem Him to go about now this way, and now

[1] *Rel. Teachers of Greece*, pp. 198–9.

[2] The books of Protagoras were publicly burnt at Athens, and Socrates was condemned to death.

[3] Ps. xxxiii. 13 ; xxxv. 1–3, 22 ; lxviii. 1–4 ; lxxvi ; lxxviii. 66–7 ; lxxxii. 1 ; lxxxvi. 8 ; civ. 2.

[4] A fragment for which we are indebted to Cl. Alex.

that.' (4) 'But without toil He rules all things by the power of His mind.'

Xenophanes, therefore, is not merely a destructive critic; he offers, in place of the prevailing polytheism, a Being, or Entity, who can command reverence and obedience, emptied of all human frailty and limitation, possessed of infinite capacities (where men possess feeble organs of sense) who controls all things by 'the Word of His Mouth', or, as he puts it, 'without toil'. Sometimes his language has a monotheistic sense; sometimes, perhaps more often, a pantheistic sense. The wonderful thing is, that in such an early age man should have arrived by the road of rational inquiry at a unifying Principle which he calls 'God' and which embraced some of the fundamental attributes of Deity. Of course, living in a polytheistic society Xenophanes sometimes uses the phraseology of his environment. It is difficult to see how he could avoid it. No doubt he is speaking colloquially when he affirms, 'Not all things have *the Gods* revealed to mortals at the first; but in course of time by searching men find out a better way.'[1] Yet, in spite of its polytheistic ring, this sentence proclaims the guiding principle of all genuine philosophical inquiry.

CHAPTER II

THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS

Although philosophers like Xenophanes were very severe upon what might be called the established faith of Greece, formulated by Homer and enriched by Hesiod, it was subjected to a more insidious assault from the Mystery Religions. These did not profess to rival but rather to supplement the ancient faith, yet in doing so they really undermined it. From one point of view Orphism, to take

[1] Cited by Cicero, *de Divinatione*, 18.

an example from one of the earliest and most influential cults, was a religious awakening, and aimed at making a spiritual impression upon its devotees which the public religion certainly failed to make. We have already marked its influence upon so representative a poet as Pindar; its influence upon philosophy was extraordinary. Xenophanes, Pythagoras, and Heraclitus in varying degree betray affinities with Orphism. If such were the case with leaders of thought, what must have been the effect upon the average Greek? Croton in Southern Italy seems to have been the centre of Orphic worship, but it spread its communities throughout Hellas. 'The rites of Eleusis were originally confined to the inhabitants of Attica: but they came in time to be open to all Greeks.' [1] In the fourth century B. C., Cybele, the Phrygian deity, 'the Great Mother', is worshipped with elaborate ceremony in the Piraeus.[2] Oriental and Hellenic mysteries vie in a friendly way with one another, or blend and fuse together.[3] 'The Mysteries were probably the survival of the oldest religion of the Greek races and of the races which preceded them. They were the worship not of the gods of the sky, Zeus and Apollo and Athene, but of the gods of the earth, and the under-world, the gods of the productive forces of nature and of death.' [4] It was not that the celestial deities were discounted or despised, but these, which were closest and most involved with human destiny, received the first homage and worship of their devotees. Those who called themselves the followers of Orpheus made Zeus the primal source and the final end of all things created, though their main interest was with the origin, the history, and the ultimate destiny of the human soul. The deities, therefore, which came

[1] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 285.

[2] Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, p. 75.

[3] Process of time only served to make this syncretistic tendency the more pronounced.

[4] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, pp. 283–4.

closest to human life became the objects of special rites, ceremonies, meditations, intercessions, and ecstasies. To the Greek nourished on the ancestral faith this present life is the only one which promises happiness and joy; the soul cast forth from the body may live in a ghostly, ineffectual way, but there is no peace; everything is shadow and seeming; there is no reality; joys are phantom joys. The life of Hades is a life of retrospect and memory and partakes of all the wistfulness of such a preoccupation. Even the Elysian fields are tolerable only; the spirit of those who dwell there is resignation, not happiness. To use an anachronism the Gospel of the Heroic Age is the gospel of earthly life. It contains a message for youth and vigour which beauty and pleasure can satisfy. It has but little for old age and decaying powers. Make the most of life while it is here; grasp its joys and do its deeds, for it passeth soon away. Achilles preferred a short and crowded life to a monotonous and uneventful one, and he is the typical Greek hero.

To supply these deficiencies in the popular religion the Mystery cults were instituted or revived. They did attempt to satisfy the craving of the soul for communion with the gods, for release from sorrow and from sin, and for a life beyond the grave. While the philosophers were addressing the reason, the mysteries were speaking to the heart of Greece. Both were groping after God, but each in their own way. The former seeking a conception of God which would satisfy the intellect; the latter seeking the gratification of spiritual and emotional instincts and aspirations. To our mind the philosophers who approached nearest to the truth were those whose researches were kindled and warmed by the mystic rites, just as it is likely that those mystic communities remained the purest and sanest which were influenced by philosophic teaching. I say, *it is likely*, because we have no certain knowledge of the esoteric side of

the Mystery religions. It would be very surprising if we had.

From what has been said it will appear that the devout worshipper at the rites of Dionysus and Demeter would find the public rites external, cold, and unappealing. In some measure they would appear false. The uninitiate with whom the μύσται would mingle at the public festivals regarded this bodily life as the best of all possible lives, while he and his brother initiates were dwelling upon, and looking forward to, release from the prison-house of flesh. Without imparting the secrets of their association their attitude of mind must have affected the general public and the orthodox rites must have suffered in consequence, not perhaps in attendance and universal acquiescence, but in heartiness and reality of worship. Thus it was that, while the philosophers were battering the old mythology, as it were, from without, the Mystery religions exerted a dissolving influence from within.

Yet the old religion remained, and remained for centuries. When St. Paul wandered up and down the Graeco-Roman world, Zeus, Athene, Apollo, and the rest, were still much in men's mouths and were accorded much public reverence. It was possible in cultured Ephesus to create a riot by a shrewdly mingled appeal to cupidity and religious fanaticism. The worship of the great goddess Diana was in danger. Nor did Constantine's proclamation of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire some three centuries later immediately destroy the honest faith of remotely placed peasantry in their ancestral gods. When it is finally destroyed, there is even to Christian ears a pathos in the cry echoing from one mountain valley to another, 'Great Pan is dead.'[1] The ancient polytheism possessed

[1] According to the legend, 'at the hour of the Saviour's Agony, a cry of "Great Pan is dead!" swept across the waves in the hearing of certain mariners—and the oracles ceased'—Mrs. Browning, *Poems, The Dead Pan* (preface).

a fundamental virtue, the recognition of spiritual power underlying the beneficence of nature, and it was to this that St. Paul appealed in his address to the Lycaonian rustics.[1] It was this also that made the old paganism so tenacious. Moreover, in its last extremity when confronted with the growing power of Christianity it received aid from its old rivals, the mystery-cult and the philosophical school.

CHAPTER III

SOME EARLY PHILOSOPHERS

Among the pre-Platonic philosophers the most interesting for our purpose are Pythagoras and Heraclitus. In origin both were Asiatic Greeks, the former of Samos, the latter of Ephesus; both unite in a remarkable way religion and philosophy; and both owed their religious inspiration, the former obviously, the latter implicitly and on one side only, to the great Orphic awakening or revival. About 530 B.C. Pythagoras emigrated from Samos and established himself in Croton, where Orphism was already flourishing. Unfortunately our knowledge of this philosopher, though large enough in volume, is only second-hand, and very vague as regards his personality and individual teaching. The founder has become absorbed in his school and many Pythagorean tenets may not have been his at all but rather late developments. However that may be, we have ground for thinking that the association between Orphism and Pythagoras was very close. In fact Pythagoreanism might quite reasonably be conceived of as an Orphic association with its own special emphasis. Orphism was pantheistic rather than polytheistic; so was Pythagoreanism. The former stressed the future of the soul and regarded the

[1] Acts xiv. 15–17.

body as a prison-house ; so did the latter. Each insisted on ' a way of life ', a method of moral discipline, as the instrument of release from the imperfections and obstacles which hedged about the soul. Each had its cycle of existences through which, as a pilgrim, the human spirit fared, ever seeking an escape from the circle of necessity—striving for ultimate reunion with the Divine. While Orphism disregarded the ancient polytheism in its peculiar rites, Pythagoreanism formulated a system of instruction which left no place for the Homeric Pantheon.

For this is where the difference comes. Orphism was a system of worship. It taught through its ritual : it appealed to the emotions. Its system spoke for itself ; it did not seek intellectual justification. But we can hardly imagine Pythagoras, who claimed to be a philosopher, resting satisfied with emotional impressions, however precious and true they may have appeared to him. Certainly the sect which cloaks itself in his name was, according to the references of Aristotle and others, as much a system of thought as ' a way of life '. The soul sought release not only by bodily asceticism but by mental training The average Orphist considered that attention to ritual and the prescribed abstinence would procure him ultimate release (λύσις) ; the Pythagorean taught that spiritual liberty would be greatly assisted by the pursuit of knowledge. The *Search for Truth* gradually overlaid the spiritual conception, and later Pythagoreans were nothing more than a philosophical sect who sought intellectual enlightenment and had forgotten, apart from certain conventions and formal abstinences, the religious inspiration of their founder. If Pythagoreanism drifted away from the pantheism of its original Orphic association, it did not get any farther than a sort of vague dualism, and even this is mentioned by later writers only, and may have no historical foundation.

Socrates was fortunate enough to be able to borrow the

book of Heraclitus from a friend. Even so Socrates found his author hard reading. 'The parts I understood were splendid; and I suppose what I failed to understand was splendid too; only it would need a Delian diver to fathom it.' For ourselves, we cannot borrow the book as Socrates did. Heraclitus survives only in fragments, or in quotation from various writers, but it is just possible that the pregnant utterances of the rugged old sage of Ephesus would be more intelligible to us than to the great teacher of Athens because we have the whole history of ancient thought present before us, especially of those investigators who followed out the lines laid down by Heraclitus and created a system on his foundation. Furthermore, we have Hebrew and Christian materials to draw from, and these assist us in accounting for Heraclitus and his teaching. For if any one in Greece had inspiration both of mind and of form, that man was Heraclitus.

There is much of the Hebrew prophet about him. His claims and his style alike imply an authority above and beyond himself. When he was a lad he professed to know nothing; suddenly he speaks, and continued to speak throughout his life, as one to whom all hidden things had been revealed. His was probably one of those strong and vigorous spirits to whom conversion and illumination come suddenly and remain permanently. It would seem that something like a flash of lightning gave to him the proper orientation, and henceforth he moved in the direction revealed to him. Such an experience tends to isolate a man from his fellows, and Heraclitus seems to have possessed more the respect than the affection of those about him, while his feeling towards them was a sort of contemptuous pity. He despises Pythagoras and Xenophanes, not for lack of knowledge, but for lack of knowledge of the right kind. He has an almost Pauline conviction of the futility of 'wisdom falsely so-called' or 'the wisdom of the

world'. The 'much-learning' of Pythagoras (πολυμαθίη) is worse than useless; it is positively injurious, because it leads men astray. The only learning worth while is that which is divinely inspired. There is no doubt that Heraclitus considered himself to have received a revelation from God, and to have been inspired to declare it. That the revelation was imperfect and incomplete, and the inspiration marred by human prejudice are characteristics entirely in keeping with the Divine method of dealing with man. Deborah, the prophetess, was probably a Henotheist; she certainly exulted in savagery and treachery.[1] Samuel's attitude towards the enemies of Jehovah was not marked by a spirit of love.[2] Indeed, all through the Old Testament we are conscious of a partial but progressive revelation delivered by men who, though empowered and inspired by their message, were yet the offspring of their own age. Christians of the philosophic type, like Justin or Clement, felt no doubt of the inspiration of such men as Heraclitus, Socrates, Plato, Cleanthes, and others; and it is perhaps due to a reaction of hyper-Semitism that the Christian world has so long considered the Hebrew to have possessed a monopoly of religious illumination, and God to have left Himself without witness among 'the nations'.[3] The liberal view of the philosophic Fathers seems on *a priori* grounds to be worthy of credence, and furthermore to be supported by the trend of pre-Christian history.

Perhaps the racial capacity for speculative investigation gave less scope for the exercise of prophetic power, and in some measure dispensed with its necessity. Prophetic phenomena of the genuine sort, as distinguished from mere soothsaying and oracular response to inquiry, is comparatively rare among Hellenes. It is, however, significant that the one man who of all others stands out as endowed

[1] Judges v. 24 ff. [2] 1 Sam. xv. 32–3.
[3] Glover, *The Conflict of Religions*, pp. 148, 279 ff.

with prophetic inspiration, Heraclitus of Ephesus, is the one who gave the original impetus to a philosophic school coming closest to Judaism and Christianity in some of its speculative tenets, but above all in its ethical code, and in its tone and temper. I refer to Stoicism.

For Heraclitus believed in the Logos. He believed that It (or He) animated himself. He did not speak to those who heard him as a teacher speaks to his class, demonstrating and proving and, where demonstration and proof fail, conjecturing and speculating. He claims a higher faculty than any of his own; he is in possession of a revelation which mere investigation could never discover. And he feels more intensely that of this revealed truth he is the preacher and the prophet. He does not say like the Hebrew prophet, 'Thus saith the Lord', 'Hear the words of the Lord', but he means much the same thing. 'Having hearkened *not unto me but unto the Logos*, it is wise to confess that all things are one' is the opening sentence of the book which only survives to us in fragments and is in spirit wonderfully close to the mode of delivery among Old Testament prophets.

The term λόγος contains an almost infinite variety of shades of meaning. It can mean anything from a shoemaker's account to the loftiest notion man can have of the Power or Agency whereby God communicates with His Creation. And this latter is what it meant in the mouth of Heraclitus, who believed that the Λόγος revealed truth to him and was in him. 'All things happen through the Logos,' he says, but it is doubtful if he attributes Personality to this Creative and Sustaining Power.[1] That would be almost too great a leap forward and scarcely harmonizes with other parts of his system as we know them. For instance, he speaks quite frequently of Fire as the fundamental principle of the Universe and seems to identify this

[1] Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 214.

with the Logos which elsewhere he describes as spiritual and, if not possessing an entity of His own, at least exhibiting Creation-ward the Power and Wisdom of God—Zeus. For he does not scorn entirely to employ the popular nomenclature in making his revelation known to his fellow Greeks. He suggests the picture of a man struggling with an Idea too large for his powers of expression. 'All things are one.' Yes. 'There is but one Wisdom.' Yes. What shall we call it? 'It wills and yet wills not to be called by the name of Zeus.' 'God . . . is changed just as Fire,' although He is one. Immutable in Being, mutable in expression. God spoke to my spirit and it kindled. Ah, yes! Call it Logos on its spiritual, Fire on its material side. Two aspects of One Eternal Essence, the animating principle, the Soul of this dynamic Universe which is in a constant state of flux, possessing an eternal movement which is its life and its God.

That is pantheism, but it is a spiritual pantheism almost as far above the static, material pantheism of the rationalizing philosopher, Xenophanes, as it was above the current polytheism. As for it, he might have quoted appropriately the vigorous words of the Psalmist, 'As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols, even the work of men's hands . . .'[1]

In what has been said about the early thinkers of Greece we notice three distinctive features which remained the mark of successive schools of thought: (1) a seeking after Truth; (2) a seeking after Unity; (3) a tendency to criticize the popular mythology either as unimportant, or as positively misleading. As regards the first two points, Heraclitus, it is true, is in a slightly different category, but the difference is only that between effort to reach a goal and the attainment of it. He claims to have had revealed to him what others were looking

[1] Ps. xcvi. 5; cxv. 4.

for, and though to modern minds his revelation may appear imperfect, and in several important respects erroneous, yet it constituted a remarkable advance upon the thought of the day, and supplied a spiritual impulse and spiritual ideas which led investigation to a higher level upon which many later thinkers stood, and which was never abandoned.

Throughout the process of this inquiry it is well for us to remember how difficult it is to express metaphysical and spiritual ideas in human language. It is necessary to clothe these ideas in figures of speech; to present them in concrete form, to make them intelligible. In doing so it is very easy to present them in a misleading way, and to produce thereby a false impression. But the very effort to express such thoughts tends to enrich and make more delicate and flexible its instrument. The reason why the Greek language excels all others as a medium of expression is, I think, that the Greeks were constantly exercising it, and in the development of thought also discovering new modes of expressing it. We have just now been considering the case of Heraclitus struggling like a hierophant to utter thoughts beyond the power of his language. With all the early philosophers we note the same disproportion between thought and instrument, and it is only when Plato is reached that the sense of the inadequacy of human language is lost in admiration of the user of it. Yet we may feel sure, in fact we know, that many of the speculations of the great masters are obscure, illusory, and imperfect, because even the glorious tongue of Hellas was not equal to them.

A case in point is Anaxagoras, who claims our attention from the midst of his contemporaries because his speculations bear directly upon our subject. He attributes everything that is to Mind, to Intelligence. He calls it νοῦς. Nevertheless he describes this highly abstract entity in such terms that one is left wondering whether the philoso-

pher's First Principle is not after all a sort of etherealized substance, Matter in its ' purest and subtlest ' form. But, as Dr. Adam says, ' No Greek thinker had hitherto attempted to distinguish mind and matter ; and there was consequently no recognized philosophical terminology by means of which the distinction could be formulated. In trying to make the new idea intelligible to his readers Anaxagoras had no alternative but to use the materialistic language of his day. . . . To Anaxagoras' contemporaries the phrase " thinnest and purest of all things " would probably have conveyed the notion of the immaterial more nearly than any other words he could have used.' [1] It is Plato who objects to Anaxagoras because he was ' entangled in natural causes '.[2] As a matter of fact, he was trying to release himself from them, and in thought probably had done so, but the limitations of language as he employed it forced him to give corporeal form to what he conceived to be pure Mind. And this Ordering Mind underlies all natural phenomena. Matter pre-existed, but inchoate. It was Mind which gave order, beauty, and purpose to what was previously shapeless mass-chaos. The two stand over against one another : Mind and Matter. The one point of likeness is that both are eternal. In all other respects they differ. Mind is active ; Matter is passive. Mind has omniscience, omnipotence, and creative power—Matter unacted upon is dead. In the fragments which survive, Anaxagoras makes no attempt to link up his great conception with Zeus, Apollo, or any other popular name, but his *Nous* possessed the distinctive attributes of deity. Yet the place he gives to Matter in his system is responsible for most of the *Dualism* which haunts the path of later Greek speculation, and the effects of his thought may be traced far beyond the pure Hellenic period into Gnostic circles and even into the Christian Church.

[1] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 259–60. [2] *Phaedo*, 97 D.

Be that as it may, we must credit Anaxagoras with the clearest and most definite expression of Theism yet granted to us.[1] The unity sought for, and thought to be discovered by philosophers of the Ionic school, was a physical unity; the Pythagoreans lost themselves in a circle of necessity, and being mathematicians supposed that the elements of existence were the elements of their favourite studies, and maintained that all things consisted of an exquisite balance between 'odd and even'. Here there is no personality, nor even any of the attributes of personality. It was on the ethical, not on the metaphysical, plane that the Pythagoreans made positive contributions to Greek life. Heraclitus could not rise above a sort of dynamic Pantheism, though his Logos doctrine became one of the most fertilizing conceptions of later Greek philosophy. It was Anaxagoras who conceived of Eternal Mind. That Matter stood over against it was of little import since, apart from Mind, it was shapeless, passive, and dead. This is the nearest point yet reached on the road to monotheism.

Meanwhile other thinkers were evolving theories which led to sheer materialism. Democritus, the forerunner of Epicurus, betrays certain superficial resemblances to Anaxagoras. He speaks of νοῦς (or ψυχή), which consists of material atoms; in fact it is the most perfect form of matter. Movement is an essential quality in the atoms which make up τὸ ὄν, and it is from this constant movement that order and life are generated. There is no directing or controlling Force, inside or out—it is sheer fortuity which produces phenomena. As one would expect, he denies the immortality of the soul, though, strange to say, he leaves room in his system for a species of spiritual beings, τὰ εἴδωλα, somewhat like the δαίμονες of the average Greek.[2] These were some of them kindly, some vindictive. Whether this

[1] Angus, *The Environment of Christianity*, p. 176.
[2] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 269.

aberration was a concession to popular superstition, or to his own, it is impossible to say.

At this point it will be necessary to note that a strong reaction had set in among cultivated men against metaphysical speculation. It did not last long and was succeeded by a period of fresh inquiry which to our minds must seem more fruitful than its predecessors. But, while it lasted, it was very vigorous and very influential. Probably the negative teaching of Democritus had much to do with the spread of scepticism, but the professional savants of the day were looked upon as responsible for its dissemination. The Sophists did not constitute a school of thought; they were rather a class of men who professed to teach wisdom for money. If they held opinions in common it was not because they possessed a system of thought to which they collectively adhered, but because their outlook upon life and their profession made such opinions natural to them. Sophists seem to have been united in their conviction that devotion to the popular religion, and absorption in metaphysical inquiry, were alike waste of time and of no practical benefit. They were rationalists, opportunists, and prided themselves on being 'men of the world'. They also claimed to impart such knowledge to their pupils as would ensure their success in the battle of life. Truth was no longer the criterion of value; utility took its place. The modern world has no cause to lift up hands of holy horror at the Sophists of ancient Athens whose ideal of education was similar to the educational standards of the majority of people in the present day. Indeed this may be said for the Sophist—his ideal was not so sordidly applied, nor did it produce such sordid results, as many of the 'get-rich-quick' methods of training which are now in vogue. When we use the terms 'sophistry' and 'sophistical argument', we are hardly conscious that we are casting reproach not merely upon a very clever and capable lot of men, but upon a class

which was held in high esteem during its period of flower, and contained names which were not only respected but distinguished. Though rather intellectually pretentious and insincere, Protagoras in his dialogue with Socrates is portrayed as no contemptible figure from the point of view either of personality or mental attainment, and Plato was by no means favourable to the Sophists. Protagoras claims to teach a man to manage his own affairs and to take his place in public life. When Socrates says, 'Do I catch your point? I suppose you mean the art of politics, and that you promise to make men good citizens?' Protagoras replies, 'Yes, that is exactly the profession I make.'[1] Although not the highest, it is a very respectable aim.

With such an aim, however, it is easy to understand that the Sophist would rid himself of everything that was not frankly utilitarian. Protagoras was expelled from Athens and his writings publicly burnt,[2] in true Mediaeval fashion, because he declares he can neither affirm nor deny the existence of the gods. An early Agnostic! If this were his attitude he would certainly not give fervent religious teaching to his pupils. Prodicus, another famous Sophist, asserts that the Grecian gods (and presumably the gods of other nations) are nothing but the personification of objects in Nature and of qualities in man.[3] In fact the Sophists would have accepted *ex animo* the Popian maxim, 'The proper study of mankind is man.'[4] They were frankly humanistic. One of their favourite sayings was 'Man is the measure of all things'.[5] Did they mean by this that the laws of life are the principles of organized human society, or that each individual man is a law unto himself?

[1] *Protagoras*, 318 E f.
[2] T. G. Tucker, *Life of Ancient Athens*, p. 145.
[3] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 277.
[4] Pope, *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii.
[5] Lewes, *History of Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 121; a formula of Protagoras.

It is difficult to say. Possibly one Sophist would teach the one thing; another, the other.[1] As I have said, they were bound together by nothing but their common profession, which induced a certain habit of mind. They sometimes quarrelled and were certainly jealous of each other. A cursory reading of Plato's *Dialogues* is enough to convince us that in his opinion the teaching of the Sophists, or that of some of them, was subversive of social life. 'Might is Right' is a doctrine which is ingeniously and strenuously upheld in more than one of the Dialogues and would seem to have Sophistic origin. If this and similar antinomian theories were characteristic of the Sophists, it is no marvel that they suffered the mild persecution of the Hellenic city states.

The rise of the Sophists was really a symptom of intellectual fatigue. The Greek mind was tired of inquiries which led nowhere, of theories which were mutually destructive, of speculations which had but the remotest bearing upon life and manners. It is as if the average Athenian youth said to himself, 'These investigations into the secrets of the universe are vague and illusory; there is no chart to guide the explorer; no certain haven for him to reach. As for the ancient gods, no one in my circle really believes in them now, but they have a humanity and warmth about them which is denied to these airy speculations, and their influence upon the multitude is very great and on the whole beneficial. Let us accept them and do them public reverence. For myself, I shall go to some wise, worldly-minded man who shall teach me to make the most of the life which is in me and around me—shape me for a career which will bring prizes to myself and incidently shed glory on immortal Athens.'[2] In fact the influence of the Sophists was due to a demand on the part of a considerable

[1] Cf. Hippias in *Protag.*, 337.

[2] The intellectual life of Greece, while not confined to Athens, had come to be concentrated there.

number of intelligent men for instruction on matters which had some definite relation to the life they were living. This the new teachers professed to supply. Whatever defects it had, its virtue was that it concerned itself with actual, everyday affairs.

In doing this it prepared the ground for a revival of interest in pure speculation and in the realities beyond the world of sense. The sophists had taught philosophers that human life had a value, and a value which could not be disregarded even in the most abstruse inquiries. Previous philosophic theories had possessed ethical elements—notably the Pythagorean—but the tendency had ever been to neglect such elements. But the very extravagances and errors of sophistical teaching showed the importance of the human interest. Moreover, it suggested a new basis of inquiry, namely, certain innate notions like Justice and Truth which, because of their practically universal acceptance, could be regarded as standards, and criteria, of thought and conduct. The method adopted to disentangle the False from the True and to establish the latter beyond dispute was what has ever since been known, by the name of its great exponent, as the Socratic method.

CHAPTER IV

SOCRATES

SOCRATES' method of dialectic[1] was very searching and very disconcerting to a vain or self-confident man. During what seemed to be a casual conversation Socrates would swiftly ask his companion to define a statement which had perhaps been somewhat dogmatically asserted. When, after some sparring the definition is given, Socrates points

[1] 'Dialectic was but a regulated conversation' (Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, pp. 118–19).

out that it is inapplicable in several cases where, if it were true, it ought to apply. A fresh attempt is made ; a fresh falsity, or inaccuracy, revealed ; and so it goes on until the victim retires discomfited and humiliated, or else if of finer spirit seeks truth in company with this wise but eccentric teacher. According to modern canons the Socratic catechism is sometimes carried beyond the bounds of good taste. We have learned ' to suffer fools gladly '. But the cultivated Athenian seemed to expect this sort of thing and to enjoy a discomfiture hugely if it were another's, not his own. In addition to this it is well for us to remember that certain great characters have appeared in human society whose mission transcends convention and whose method is above criticism. And Socrates without doubt was one of these.

Some have been daring enough to institute a comparison between Socrates and Jesus of Nazareth. He has even been called ' the Pagan Christ '. The comparison is a dangerous one if the points of contrast are not also kept clearly in view. It is not, however, surprising that it should have been made, for the partial resemblance is sufficiently striking. If one traditional view of Our Blessed Lord's physical appearance, based upon a literal interpretation of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah (II) be accepted, the resemblance extends even to bodily presence.[1] Socrates also had ' no form nor comeliness and . . . no beauty that we should desire him '. From contemporary accounts he was almost ludicrously ugly, ' with a face like a gargoyle '[2] and a misshapen body. Yet this was the most loved, most dreaded, man at Athens, in the intellectual and artistic centre of the Hellenic world, in a society where, and at a time when, bodily beauty was more appreciated than at any

[1] Isa. liii. 2. Personally, I shrink from the comparison.

[2] I forget who says this, but it accords remarkably well with the description of Alcibiades, who likens his loved master to the Satyr Marsyas !

other place or period in the history of mankind. The truth of the matter was that the rough ungainly form enshrined a mighty and beautiful soul. Whatever outward attraction Jesus of Nazareth possessed, or did not possess, its possession, or its lack, seems to have impressed none of His contemporaries. Their imagination is smitten by the Words, the Life, the Power, and the Love of the great prophet of Galilee.

'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'[1] 'Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?'[2] Compare these two statements, taken at random from the Gospels, with the following, said to be from the lips of Alcibiades: 'When we hear any other speaker, even a very good one, he produces absolutely no effect upon us, or not much, whereas the mere fragments of you (Socrates) and your words, even at second hand . . . amaze and possess the soul of every man, woman, and child who comes within hearing of them. . . . My heart leaps within me more than that of any Corybantian reveller, and my eyes rain tears when I hear them. And I observe that many others are affected in the same manner. I have heard Pericles and other great orators . . . but I never had any similar feeling; my soul was not stirred by them, nor was I angry at the thought of my own slavish state. . . .'[3] In each case the thought was powerful, creative, and sublime, issuing forth in words having an authority which was Divine, and hence the impression produced was profound.

It is needless to prolong a comparison which, so far as it exists, is obvious to any student of the New Testament and of Greek literature. Emphasis might, however, be laid upon the sense of mission which animated them both and

[1] John vi. 68. [2] Luke xxiv. 32.

[3] *Symp.* 215 D ff. (Jowett's translation); for a slightly different rendering, see Lewes, *Hist. of Phil.*, vol. i, pp. 128–9.

the reception that mission met with in Athens and Jerusalem; warm adhesion on the part of some, while the attitude of the official classes, in both cases reticent and cautious at first, shifted finally towards bitter hostility. Then, for both, there is the trumped-up charge, the accusation of impiety (blasphemy), the unjust condemnation, the willingness to die, the cruel death itself. In each case, the death produced an effect as powerful as the life. Socratic ideals lived again in the lives and instruction of disciples. As Jesus of Nazareth had his biographers, so had Socrates. Xenophon filled the rôle of the Synoptists; Plato that of St. John. Of each master there was a side which the ordinary man of honest heart could understand, or at least apprehend, and record, along with the facts and incidents of life; there was another side with which only men of a high spiritual order could enter into contact. So there is a double interpretation for the martyr of Greece, and for the Greater One of Palestine.

In recalling these features of a comparison which has more than once been drawn, the reader will no doubt trace the mingling of two elements: (1) a likeness of circumstance; (2) a likeness of spirit and character. It is in the latter that the chief danger lies. As we note points of likeness we are apt to overlook differences which may be fundamental. For instance, Socrates speaks of certain innate ideas of Justice and of Truth, and other ideas which by argumentation may be disentangled from current fallacy, and he says in effect 'Let these be the guides of life'. He does not point to himself and say 'I am the guide of life'. 'Follow me.' He merely tried to clear away ignorance and substitute knowledge. He pointed not to himself, but to certain impersonal ideas as furnishing a standard. Whether there is a God behind these ideas he does not always seem quite sure, but is rather inclined to think that there is. Very different is this attitude of mild

ironical inquiry, the teaching by persuasion, by argument, by an appeal to the intellect as much as, or more than, to the conscience—very different, from the Divine Egoism of the Founder of Christianity which the most searching literary and textual criticism of the fourfold Evangel cannot away with, and which the history of Christendom for nineteen centuries has triumphantly vindicated.

I believe that the reason for the likeness between Socrates and Jesus is that the former possessed something of the Christ-Spirit. Others did also. Heraclitus was convinced that 'man's soul is naturally one with the universal Logos',[1] but some maintain Its purity better than others. Bias, the philosopher, for instance, 'had more of the Logos than other men'.[2] There are, then, degrees of possession. The Logos is the Expression of the Thought, Will, and Spirit of God. In all men there is a spark of this Divine Fire; in some of creative mind and moral energy there is a limited but steady flame; but in Jesus of Nazareth dwelt 'all the fulness of the Godhead bodily'.[3] Among those of the steady flame, Logos-bearing souls, I would place Heraclitus, Socrates, and others in their degree—men who in their character and witness approximated imperfectly and incompletely to the Light of the World. It was a narrow Hebraistic tendency fostered by the legalism of the Latin Church which prevented Western Christendom from recognizing 'the broken lights' of Paganism, a recognition which reflects honour upon the Greek-speaking Apologists, and witnesses to their breadth of mind and sympathy.

In essential respects Socrates personified a reaction from the prevailing scepticism of his time. Yet it is among the ironies of life that he was confounded with the Sophists, the Sophists whom he delighted to bait, and whom he so frequently exposed as blind leaders of the blind! Even so acute an observer as Aristophanes attacks him in one of his

[1] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 235. [2] Ib., p. 213.
[3] Col. ii. 9.

most famous comedies [1] as the champion of that type of opinion and of that profession of life. No doubt in the minds of many who approved his condemnation and death there was the conviction that Athens was thus rid of at least one pestilent Sophist. Reading the *Dialogues* of Plato, where he occupies the foreground, we can see how easily his hostile contemporaries could seize upon the destructive side of his teaching and feel that here was the most dangerous heretic of them all.[2] The young men about Socrates would be immensely interested in the removal of rubbish, and the clearing of the ground, but would pay less attention, chiefly because the process was considerably more difficult, to the careful erection of solid truth upon the ground recently occupied by fallacy and error.

Again, we have already noted, and noted favourably, the Humanism of the best of the Sophists. Socrates was like them in this also. For while, especially according to the interpretation of Plato, he was ready enough to embark on speculative voyages to realms unknown, his chief concern was with man. But his interest in man and the whole trend of his inquiry about him was not, like that of many of the Sophists, sordidly utilitarian. He did not seek to make his disciples successful men of the world, but wise men and good men. He did not sneer at the popular religion as did many of his contemporaries. He seems to have felt the beauty and truth which were enshrined in it. He conformed to the worship of the State; offered sacrifices; consulted oracles in which he had the greatest faith; [3] and possessed a conception of prayer above that of many moderns. Xenophon says 'he used to pray for that which is good, without further specification, believing that the gods know best what is good'.[4] Man should worship God according to

[1] *The Clouds.* [2] Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece*, pp. 334–5.
[3] 'He passed his whole life in fulfilling the commands of the oracle at Delphi.' [4] *Mem.*, i. 3. 2.

the law or custom of the State.[1] Here there is a suggestion of the unity of God under the varying forms of worship, perhaps also under the varying names and attributes of Deity. It would be quite according to human psychology that Socrates should on ordinary occasions speak and feel like the rest of the Athenians, though perhaps with greater intelligence and higher spirituality, while in moments of exaltation and spiritual stimulation he would catch glimpses of Divine reality and speak as only a convinced monotheist could speak. And this twofold attitude would be thoroughly honest and sincere.

But when Socrates strayed into metaphysics it was to support his ethics, not with the primary purpose of discovering new truth in that direction. He seems to have felt that speculation of such a type was waste of time. His mission may be described from one point of view as a revolt against the metaphysical guesses of the pre-Socratic philosophers; from another, as a revolt against the materialism and earth-bound practicality of contemporary Sophists. He believed that God had not left himself without witness in the heart (mind) of man. He declared the existence of universal objective truth and maintained that the *criterion* of that truth was the correspondence of our notions and concepts with it. Man went wrong about these matters because he was ignorant, or because he thought loosely and carelessly, but all questions of right and wrong could be submitted to this criterion, which was infallible. Ignorance was the great enemy of morality. In his system ignorance held the place which sin occupies in Christian ethics. He seemed convinced that if a man *knew* what was right he would do it. What sublime optimism! He did not make allowance for perverted will and 'corrupt affections'. Of course the Socratic Knowledge, like the Reason which appropriated it, was a higher, greater thing than what is connoted by our

[1] *Mem.*, i. 3. 1.

modern term. It corresponded rather to the Christian term, Faith. To Socrates it was unnatural for the possessor of the true knowledge to be an immoral being. The conduct of Critias and Alcibiades, I often think, ought to have worried Socrates, and caused him to mistrust his conviction that knowledge inevitably entailed virtue. But, of course, he saw the better side of these men, and, even so, would probably grant with readiness that their knowledge was an imperfect thing. It is easy for us to point out that man needs not only knowledge but power to be virtuous, but the man who discovered a universal standard of the Right and the True, and for whom genuine knowledge was what conformed to it, was one of the greatest discoverers of all time. And that man was Socrates.

I have spoken of him as a discoverer. Is that a proper description of him? Was he merely a great seeker after Truth—a humble inquirer, as he would have styled himself—or a prophet to whom something had been revealed? There is much to be said for either view, and it is in all likelihood a problem which will never be solved. While his method and manner were those of one devoting his great powers of mind to the highest uses, there was underlying his dialectic a deep moral earnestness and even a spiritual beauty which was quite new in the intellectual life of Greece. Now and then he lifts the veil of his inner life and mentions an attendant daemon, or Divine Voice, which sometimes in trivial but sometimes in important matters restrains him from evil. According to Plato, the daemonic influence is purely negative and very often on the plane of expediency rather than of morality. Yet even there the cumulative effect of the daemon's counsel is to keep Socrates true to his mission untrammelled by political or economic associations.[1] Xenophon, however, enlarges the sphere of the daemon's activity and represents it as a sort of prophetic faculty, or

[1] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 321–2.

gift.[1] Whoever is right, the possession of such a spiritual guide indicates something more than a mere rationalist.

And what Socrates says of himself in several of the *Dialogues*, and especially in the *Apology*, bears this out. He felt that he had a divinely appointed mission to his native city. 'It is the God who has laid this duty upon me, by means of oracles and dreams and every way whereby God manifests his will to man.' If he should leave Athens, as some might be inclined to counsel, 'to do this', he says, 'would be to disobey God,' though in declaring so he complains that his hearers would think he was speaking 'ironically'. Also, 'God ordains that I should follow after wisdom and examine myself and others.'[2]

All this, of course, must be balanced by the frequent occasions in which he pleads for calm and dispassionate inquiry and maintains that he himself will seek for truth by the exercise of reason alone. Yet this does by no means imply a contradiction. Probably the highest order of intelligences ever combines the intuitive faculty, upon which revelation acts, with superior mental powers. St. Paul was one of these, St. Augustine another, and Socrates also. It is such men whom God uses for the moral and spiritual advancement of mankind. What, then, was the gift of Socrates to Greece and to humanity? First of all, he awakened the conscience of Greece; secondly, he established a criterion of ethics, making it a matter of principle and not of opinion, or of political and social convention; thirdly, he put into the hands of intelligent men an instrument of value in the search for Truth, whether metaphysical, or psychological, namely, Dialectic, wherein argument by induction and definition were insisted upon; fourthly, he raised the eyes of men from the petty quarrels of petty city-states to

[1] *Mem.*, i. 1. 4.

[2] Plato, *Apol.*, 28 E 33 C, 37 E, (cited *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 324–5).

the vision of mankind; and, finally, gave a fresh impetus to the search for moral and spiritual truth at a time when men were yielding in despair to the materialism of the Sophists, an impetus which did not entirely lose its force before the Sun of Righteousness shone upon the world. But not only these things. Socrates witnessed in his own person and in his teaching to the soul-hunger and aspiration of the ancient world. He seems to have been conscious of the powerlessness of abstraction to elevate man. 'Oh, if only virtue had a body and men could see her with their eyes, how they should run to embrace her.' He, like many others of the noblest in Paganism, was walking in the shadows straining towards the Light.

CHAPTER V

PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

PLATO interpreted Socrates. Many have thought that fecundity of imagination and a writer's artistry have given to us more in the picture than there was in the original. Certainly the Socrates of Xenophon and he of Plato differ widely. The hero of the *Memorabilia* is a great moral teacher tending towards the prophet; the hero of the *Dialogues* is a brilliant rationalist and an acute logician, revealing ever and anon a mystic beauty and spiritual insight which raises the argument from earth to heaven. One cannot help suspecting—and I think the suspicion is a well-grounded one—that Plato uses Socrates as the vehicle to carry his own wares to the market of inquiry and the exchange of thought. But Plato was more than a great teacher of ethics, and while no doubt the master supplied the stimulus and much germinating thought, it was the disciple who raised the most imposing philosophical system that the world has ever known. His knowledge was

encyclopaedic, his scope the whole Universe, and his mind as well endowed, and well trained, for the mighty task as human mind could be. Moreover, the gifts of imagination, of literary expression, of a certain mystical quality, were there as allies of the faculty of reason. It is probable that had Socrates never lived and taught there would have been no Plato—no Plato as we know him, though it is incredible that such mental powers, joined to powers of expression, would not have exercised themselves fruitfully whatever their antecedents and environment. Yet it was the twofold Socratic revolt against (1) futile speculation concerning τὰ ἄδηλα, (2) the materialistic teaching of the Sophists, which gave Plato the direction that has made him what he is in the history of thought. Like his master his first interest was human, and, like his master again, he conceived of man as a spiritual being with reason and with conscience and, as a guide and standard for these faculties, certain universal objective principles like Truth and Justice. Having in these elements of his predecessor's doctrine a firm though narrow foundation he prepared to build thereupon a vast structure of philosophical thought which still enthrals the mind of the world, which has influenced all serious schools of opinion, which has won the grudging respect and admiration of opponents, and has contributed much in the way of rational interpretation to the dogmas of the Christian Faith.[1]

So there was a return to the cosmological speculations of the earlier philosophical schools, but from a new basis and with a new direction. Anaximander and Thales and the rest were 'cabined and confined', as was natural, by physical concepts. This led them at the worst to sheer materialism; at the best to pantheism. They found the Unity of the Cosmos in water, air, or the exquisite balance of opposites. Even Heraclitus, who wanted to express

[1] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, pp. 81, 238, 240–1; also Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, p. 69.

more, was not able to escape from the fatal circle. The animating principle of the Universe is the Divine Logos, but the Logos is Fire, he said. The earlier sages were building castles in the air out of the elaborate fancies of their brains. They evolved a theory and then explained and justified it to their own satisfaction, and that of their disciples. No wonder there was a reaction. The Sophists therefore said, ' Let us leave all this cloudy stuff alone and confine ourselves to teaching men how to get the most out of life. We know man, we know his needs, his worldly ambitions, let us satisfy them.' Socrates said in effect, ' Ah yes, but man cannot live by bread alone. He has something in him which remains unaffected by food, clothing, and worldly success. Man is a moral being with reason and conscience. Let us clear away the rubbish of false knowledge, that he may see by means of these faculties the universal principles of right living.' Accordingly Plato had a new basis whence to begin his investigations ; mankind, with its wonderful complexity of nature ; and a new direction, suggested by the fact that man was a spiritual being. Under such circumstances it could only be through sheer perversity that thinkers should be lost again in materialistic explanations of the Cosmos.

Plato, however, did more than make a fresh start in cosmological investigation. He employed a new method, or rather employed a method which Socrates had already used with success in his anthropological researches. He argued from the known to the unknown, from the individual to the universal, and it is this inductive method, as it is called, which is responsible for the solving of so many of Nature's secrets. It is induction which has changed Astrology into Astronomy, Alchemy into Chemistry, and the queer, shrewd guess-work of ancient herbalists and chirurgeons into the science of Medicine. Whether it has done so much for Metaphysics, Plato's peculiar province, is

a debatable question.[1] But it has done this much; it has cleared the way for human thought so far as it can travel, unaided, on the road to eternal Truth. It has demonstrated furthermore that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned; in other words, that Reason is an imperfect instrument in the search for God, that His discovery, if He be discoverable, rests with Him; that, when found, the whole spiritual nature of man makes the discovery, and not the logical faculty in isolation. This certainly is not the conclusion which Plato reached, but it seems the conclusion forced upon the mind of man after centuries of thought-conflict in which Platonism took a distinguished, indeed a predominant, part.

No, Plato thought he had reached the Truth. I use the word *thought* advisedly, because his knowledge is as different as possible from the certain assurance of St. Paul, St. John, or St. Augustine. It is a wavering and uncertain conclusion which he reaches, as any one who reads his most theological of treatises, the *Timaeus*, can see for himself. The humility and awe which pervade its pages, especially as the points of the argument mature, are both moving and admirable. He has reason alone to guide him in the vastness and mystery of the Divine Being and Purpose, reason touched with imagination, and quickened by an intuition which would be un-Hellenic, save that a few choice souls like Plato have rescued the Greek race from the imputation of spiritual apathy.[2] This religious quality is, however, not confined to the *Timaeus*. It is to be found everywhere, even where theological subjects are in the background, even where the human interest is uppermost. And as I have already suggested Plato sets out upon his quest with mankind as his *point d'appui*. But it is man as a spiritual

[1] Lewes, *History of Philosophy*, vol. i, p. 274.

[2] The strong hold the Mystery religions had on Greek life also assists to remove the imputation.

being which chiefly fascinates him, and in the human spirit he finds a likeness to God. 'The sure and abiding conviction of the presence of a divine element within us, . . . makes itself felt in nearly all the *Dialogues* of Plato. It is the ultimate source of all his idealism, religious and metaphysical, no less than moral and political, and may well be considered the most precious and enduring inheritance which he has bequeathed to posterity.' [1]

By the use of this method of induction under conditions of regulated conversation, or dialectic, Plato in philosophical form prepared the thinking world for the religion of Jesus Christ—or at least contributed the largest share of the preparation. Clement of Alexandria declares that Plato wrote ἐπινοίᾳ Θεοῦ, and other early Apologists for the Christian Faith, like Justin Martyr and Origen, recognize the close affinity between Platonism and Christianity.[2] Perhaps it is also in his insistence upon the essential spirituality of man that the affinity is most striking. Man is a celestial, not a terrestrial, being, οὐράνιον φυτόν, οὐκ ἔγγειον,[3] he maintains; and upon this principle (ἀρχή) he builds up his superstructure. Upon one of the two implications of this principle, the soul's preexistence, Christian Revelation has made no pronouncement; the other, the soul's immortality, has ever been a fundamental doctrine of our religion.

But how did this great religious thinker bridge the gulf between Man, the spiritual being, bound and hedged about by body (σῶμα) and the things of sense (τὰ φαινόμενα), and his spiritual Source and spiritual Home? By the method of induction, employed in rational and regulated discussion which he had inherited from his predecessor, Socrates, wherein he often utilizes his revered master as guide and oracle of the debate. He would set up a hypothesis

[1] Adam, *Rep. of Plato*, note 501 B.
[2] Ib., *Vitality of Platonism*, p. 2.
[3] *Tim.*, 90 A.

and proceed to test it by the conclusions to which it led. If it survived the test of one conclusion he would then proceed to try it by another, and another. If it survived the test of all imaginable conclusions then the hypothesis took rank as a principle, and became a stepping-stone to further knowledge. Principle is fitted to principle in an ascending staircase, and these principles (ἀρχαί) correspond to certain Ideas which arrange themselves in an eternal scale up to the Good. The principles discovered by Reason are copies of eternal Forms or Patterns (παραδείγματα) of Ideas which 'climb the steep Ascent of Heaven' to the One and Supreme Good. In reality these principles of Plato are the Socratic principles, but they are given an infinite application. They are no longer anthropocentric, but rather theocentric. The human (or cosmic) principles have suggested the eternal Ideas. As there is unity among cosmic and human principles, so there is unity among the eternal Ideas. The unity of law, conduct, and character is but the counterpart of the unity of the Eternal Idea which is one organic whole, though composed of many parts.

The above is but the slimmest thread of explanation directed towards an understanding of one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest, effort made by man to realize 'things visible and invisible'. That the theory of Ideas should have flaws and imperfections is to be expected. For instance there is a strong suspicion that not mere reason but reason linked with intuition and imagination has enabled the thinker to bridge the gulf between human copies and Divine Forms. In other words, he reaches a conclusion upon grounds which are not those of pure reason. It is possible to charge him with an occasional indulgence in the conjectural habit of the earlier philosophers; at times he writes with a spiritual glow and intensity almost suggestive of inspiration. From the

standpoint of mere rational inquiry these may be defects, but from the point of view of those who desire the discovery of Truth *by any means*, the exercise of the faculties of imagination and spiritual perception are to be welcomed rather than condemned. The Platonic speculations have enriched and ennobled the thought of man for centuries. Platonism (and Stoicism) preserved the ancient world from complete degeneration and kept alive embers, which otherwise would have fallen into ashes, to be kindled into flame by the preaching of Christ. Poets, thinkers, preachers, and reformers from Plato's day to this have been, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, elevated by the teaching of the wise man who diffused his sweetness and light in Athens four hundred years before the coming of Christ.[1] When men, some forty years ago, rejoiced in the poetic thoughts and fancies of the great mid-Victorians, most of them supposed they were reading Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, and Ruskin. They were; but they were doing more than that. They were enjoying Plato, or Platonic and Stoic thought, interpreted and modernized by, distilled through, the personalities of men who could do no better than make fresh and vivid those thoughts which have run perennial through the ages since his day.[2] As to the normal Christian of devout habit, whether of ancient or of modern times, it is difficult to conceive of him as being anything but a Platonist in thought, and in some important respects, a Stoic in conduct.[3]

For one of the fundamentals of Christian doctrine, or of Judaism, is that of God's Transcendence, and it is one of the most characteristic of Plato's conceptions. His first

[1] 427 B. C.

[2] Wordsworth in his enthusiasm for Nature is sometimes almost a Pantheist, and hence more of a Stoic than a Platonist, but in his beautiful and mystic *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, he is purely Platonic.

[3] Suggested by Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 238.

broad distinction was between the things which appear or become, and the things which are, which belong to Mind.[1] The former, contrary to modern materialistic notions, are fleeting shadowy phantasms, faint copies of reality; the latter are permanent, real, eternal. And it is with the latter that God dwells. 'Absolute Unity, Absolute Being, and all other terms which express His unique supremacy, were gathered up in the conception of Mind; for Mind in the highest plane of its existence is self-contemplative; the modes of its expression are numerous and perhaps infinite; but it can itself go behind its modes and so retire, as it were, a step farther back from the material objects about which its modes employ themselves.'[2] To express this conception in the manner proper to Plato himself, the Good (*τὸ ἀγαθόν*) is over against and beyond the universe.[3] In the *Timaeus* Plato maintains this thesis, but brings God and Matter into closer union, the world of Ideas and the world of sense, by postulating a sort of Divine Image (*εἰκών*), or Reflection, only-begotten (*μονογενής*). This is the soul of the world, the universe, and in its material or physical sense, the world (universe) is the body embracing the Only-Begotten. In some respects it is Heraclitus' Logos under another name, but it is a pure-spiritual conception, while that of Heraclitus lies under the suspicion of materialism. Furthermore, the Ephesian makes no distinction—it is doubtful if he sees any—between the Primal Being and the Logos. With Plato there is the clearest distinction, and yet the closest interdependence and interaction. It is thus he attempts to bridge the gulf between God and His Universe. In doing so he comes rather close to the Christian doctrine of

[1] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, pp. 240–1.

[2] *Tim.*, 92 C and 37 C.

[3] *οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρεσβείᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος.* (Plato, *Rep.*)

the Trinity, but it is necessary to say that there is here no profound conviction and illumination. It is rather a superb guess. Its constituent parts are chiefly intellectual, touched with reverence and insight. It represents almost the apex of pre-Christian thought in an attempt to reconcile the Transcendence and the Immanence of God, though Philo by blending Platonic and Stoic elements advanced a step farther.

Notwithstanding all Plato's power of thought and imagination, he could not shake himself free from the Dualism which hampered continuously the speculations of Hellenic philosophers. It worried him exceedingly that man, a spiritual being, should hanker after the things of sense, the transient bubbles of his worldly life, while he forgot his pre-existent home,[1] and neglected to provide for immortality. Sometimes he seems to cut himself free from the thought of matter as at enmity with the Good, and with the spirit of man. It is on these occasions when he speaks of matter also as being controlled and directed by the Creator through the Icon (εἰκών), but even so it is often intractable. If I read him aright, it is this intractableness of Matter which produces Necessity, and Necessity stands over against the Good. It is necessity which causes imperfection in Creation, though the Idea corresponding to it is perfect. If the mighty forces of the invisible are thus restricted in their operation by Necessity, by Matter fundamentally, what of the human spirit? The subject is skilfully expounded in the Allegory of the Cave.[2] Plato clearly intends us to see that as the Cave is a picture of the visible world, so the visible is a picture of the unseen. Man is not supposed to content himself with the obscure, shadowy shapes which surround him as in a cave, but to strive to reach the sunlight of the perfect day where are

[1] The primary thought of the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*.

[2] *Rep.*, Bk. VII, 1 ff.

the true realities. 'We will ever cleave to the upward road and follow after righteousness and wisdom.'[1] Therefore he bids the soul, 'look upward from things seen to things unseen,[2] and set its thoughts on things immortal and divine'.[3] The soul of man must set himself to escape from the Cave—it is the prison-house of the mystery-religions—for it is only by effort the immaterial can free itself of Matter and soar aloft (we say aloft) to its true home.

And Matter remains; it appears indestructible. The Creator is not the Creator in our sense, but rather the Constructor of hitherto formless Chaos, and through the stubbornness of Matter, the work thus effected is necessarily inadequate and imperfect. The harmony and beauty shining on the face of Nature is the power of the Spiritual, of the Good. Apart from the latter it is repellent and contrary to Eternal Mind. The philosopher almost approaches to monism when he speaks of Matter apart from Mind as non-existent. But he soon returns to the view of an Eternal antithesis between Mind and Matter. Yet there can be no philosophical peace till unity is achieved. There are still opposing streams of thought, and doubtless there will continue to be materialistic monists like the sages of the Ionic school,[4] and dualists like Anaxagoras and Plato, until men learn that in the contemplation of Eternal Mysteries they must become as little children, and walk by faith and not by sight.

Passing from Plato to Aristotle is like moving from a veranda, where, looking out, one can feast his eyes upon an exquisite scene of beauty whose farthest distances are lightly clothed in mystic, coloured haze, and returning into a comfortable, well-ordered room where everything is to hand, or at least accessible. Transcendent mysteries are outside, but here one can sit and do one's

[1] *Rep.*, Bk. VII (end), 621 C.
[2] Id., 529 A.
[3] *Tim.*, 90 C. *φρονεῖν ἀθάνατα καὶ θεῖα.*
[4] e. g. Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes.

work. Aristotle is like that. Man and Nature are his theme. He made philosophy a science, while Plato was turning it into a religion. He is not non-religious, but his main interests are ethical and physical. These two philosophers represent the opposite poles of thought and mental temperament; they are not antagonistic but complementary. No doubt it is a matter for thankfulness that the reaction from Idealism came so soon, as Platonism under control of adventurous, but inferior, minds would have been a dangerous thing without the weight of a cool, deliberate rationalism as a sort of ballast. In fact sanity and practicality are the chief notes of Aristoteleanism, qualities which have ensured this mode of philosophy a long and honourable history at the courts of Baghdad and Cordova, and in the monasteries and universities of the Middle Ages. There is something peculiarly sympathetic between the practical and methodical system of the Latin Church and the philosophy of this great man who represents one type of cultivated mind, as Plato does the other. Some one has said with a great deal of truth that every babe born into the world is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelean. That the greatest transcendent thinker should be followed immediately—for Aristotle was the pupil and sometime friend of Plato—by the great apostle of scientific thought is matter for deep thankfulness. The former had pierced as far as mental eye could reach into the mystery of the Eternal; the latter called attention back to man in his present setting with gifts and opportunities of noble service among his fellows. The ancient world stimulated by the thought of Plato could be enlightened by the Great Illuminator; the ancient world guided by the common sense and moral vigour of Aristotle could be cured by the Great Regenerator. There was something in the ancient world which leaped to meet the Incarnate Life of the Son of God, something which was elevated by Plato, and preserved by Aristotle.

CHAPTER VI

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

But these two philosophers were separated from Jesus of Nazareth by centuries. The Greek city-state (πόλις) was lost in the Macedonian Empire, and the treasures of Greek civilization were made common to the non-Hellenic world. A period of synthesis, of fusion, of eclecticism must needs follow the period of creative effort in art, literature, and thought. It is not enough that there should be production; there must be diffusion. Consequently, not only do we find a combination and blend of ideas in the post-Hellenic period, but a greater spread, a wider dissemination of thought and culture. The Greek language became a sort of universal tongue. This, of course, was more marked from Sicily to the Euxine and the Euphrates, but the official classes of the later Republic of Rome, and the subsequent Empire, together with cultivated Romans everywhere, spoke Greek as a second language. However much the so-called barbarian races retained their local speech in their intercourse with one another, Greek became the vehicle of communication between themselves and other peoples.

And the Macedonian conquests did more than confer language on subject peoples; it influenced their life and thought. In a real though partial sense the world became Greek. As we have already seen, one of the stiffest and most virile races of antiquity, that of the Jews, became in its dispersed portions deeply Hellenized, and even the Palestinian Jew was influenced against his will. Another virile race, the growingly dominant one of the Hellenistic period, the Latin, while it preserved its language and the

laws peculiar to itself, embraced *con amore*, the culture of Hellas.

> Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes
> Intulit agresti Latio . . .[1]

Of course rigid conservatives like Cato strove to combat the subtle influence of foreign manners and foreign modes of thought, but without avail. The standard of civilization was not in Italy but in Greece.

With the exception of these two peoples, the stubborn Palestinian Jew and the vigorous Italian,[2] the task of Hellenization was easy. And it is significant that the centre of gravity shifted from the pure Hellenic world to points outside Hellas, where there was assembled a reasonably large Greek population. Though ever venerable and illustrious, the supremacy of Athens was challenged and finally overthrown by the cities of the Macedonian Empire. Pergamum [3] in Asia Minor became famous for its art, and the Attalids vied with the Ptolemies in their encouragement of letters and of science. Alexandria has already been noticed in reference to general culture, and was a centre of Hellenizing influence not merely for Egypt but for the whole south-east portion of the Mediterranean. Its culture in varying phases and commingled ingredients was of longer duration and greater potency than that of any of its rivals. Second only to Alexandria in splendour and population, Antioch on the Orontes did in Syria and contiguous territory what Alexandria did in Egypt 'and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene'.[4] The narrative of the Mithridatic wars shows, among other things, how the

[1] Horace, *Epist.*, Lib. II, 1.

[2] The Italian peasantry was almost entirely unaffected, except where it came into contact with the colonies of Magna Graecia.

[3] Adolf Holm, *History of Greece*, vol. iv, pp. 467–73. Holm quite truly describes the civilization of Pergamum as purely Hellenic. Yet on that account it was a powerful Hellenizing influence in Asia Minor.

[4] Acts ii. 10.

Hellenic veneer had spread over the whole sub-continent of Asia Minor in the last century B. C.[1] As an illustration of general familiarity with Greek masterpieces, side by side with oriental savagery, it is interesting to note that the *Bacchae* of Euripides was performed in remote Ctesiphon,[2] and the head of Crassus, recently defeated and killed at Carrhae,[3] was substituted for that of Pentheus, and displayed to the huge delight of the half-Hellenized audience.[4]

Nor was it among oriental races alone that Hellenic literature was appreciated or Hellenic studies pursued, though in the East the pressure of the language of Demosthenes and the thought of Plato was naturally stronger, and the effect more profound. As I have already indicated, Rome came under the intellectual sway of Greece. Aspiring and aristocratic Roman youth attended Athens as young men to-day go up to the universities. To haunt the groves of Academia or the avenues of the Lyceum for a year or two was considered the crown of a liberal education. But what is more significant still, 'in all Western schools Greek was taught as well as Latin'.[5] In this way a familiarity with Greek culture was probably more widely diffused among the intelligent classes of Southern Gaul, Spain, and Northern Africa than a knowledge of that of France is among ourselves. Otherwise the poets of Italy with the widest vogue, Virgil, Catullus, and Horace for instance, could not have been understood by their public, so permeated are they with the spirit and tone of Greece, so replete with allusions direct and indirect to the mythology and classic lore of Hellas.

Since Grecian civilization and Grecian culture had spread far and wide during the centuries following upon

[1] Holm, *Hist. of Greece*, vol. iv, caps. xxv–xxvi; Finlay, *Hist of Greece*, vol. i, p. 4.
[2] Capital of Parthia.
[3] 53 B. C.
[4] Holm, *Hist. of Greece*, vol. iv, p. 575.
[5] Bigg, *Church's Task under the Roman Empire*, p. 6.

the Macedonian Conquest, it is not surprising to find also a general diffusion of Greek philosophic ideas and methods. From the nature of the case their public was more restricted. For three men who feel and enjoy, there is only one who thinks. But among thinkers the Greek philosophy was eagerly embraced, and the bulk of original thought and striking adaptation of previous thought, was produced by the fusion of Hellenic and non-Hellenic elements. The pure Greek could go no farther than Plato and Aristotle, but contact with Jew and Persian supplied new materials and suggested new combinations. Possibly far-off India, through other races as its media, furnished a new incentive to mental processes. Does not Stoicism, so far as its cosmogony is concerned, exhibit a strong affinity with the speculations of pantheistic Hinduism ?

CHAPTER VII

THE STOIC

Stoicism is the most characteristic school of thought during the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman periods. It was not a pure Greek product ; many of its elements and some of its great teachers came from the East. In the sphere of intellect and morals it was a symptom of what was going on in the general life of the world. First there was contact, then fusion, then synthesis. The mind of Hellas was weary, but touch with other thoughts and other temperaments had a stimulating effect, and with the incorporation of fresh ideas, there came new constructive efforts. Epicureanism was a logical application of the speculations of Democritus to the problems of life and conduct. Happiness is the natural pursuit of man, and its attainment the *summum bonum* of human life. The body politic was despaired of, but the individual was free

to enjoy and be happy during the short span of existence. Beyond it there was naught but 'the care-free repose of death'.[1] The Sceptics were, for this later age, and in a speculative way, what the Sophists had been in a practical fashion for the age of Socrates. Both were pessimists, and their pessimism was the result of intellectual and moral fatigue. But in Stoicism there was a resurgence of confidence and hope, a fervour, and moral earnestness which attracted and held the best minds and characters while the social structure of civilization extended, and afterwards decayed, under the shadow of Macedon and then of Rome.

'Alarmed at the scepticism which seemed inevitable following speculations of a metaphysical kind, Zeno, like Epicurus, fixed his thoughts principally upon Morals.'[2] Born at Citium,[3] a Phoenician colony of Cyprus, and probably of Phoenician, and therefore of Semitic, descent, Zeno is typical of Hellenistic, as distinct from Hellenic, civilization. He represents the blend of Greek and Oriental culture; of the commingling of the thought of Athens with that of the East; of the construction of a system of philosophy adapted to a cosmopolitan social life, whence the conception of the city-state had for ever vanished, and where, later on, the polite fiction of republican forms made no difference. And what was true of the founder of Stoicism is true in the main of the leading teachers of this school. 'Hardly a single Stoic of eminence was a citizen of any city in the heart of Greece.'[4] Predominantly Semitic or Graeco-Semitic[5] in the first period, the most famous Stoics of the last phase of the cult were Latin, or possessed of Latin culture, and engaged in spreading their tenets in the

[1] 'Leti secura quies.'
[2] Lewes, *Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. i, pp. 355–6.
[3] 336 B. C.
[4] *Encyc. Brit.*, art. 'Stoicism', vol. xxii, p. 561 (9th edition).
[5] Von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, p. 43.

West. Thus they did for thought and morals what the Roman *imperium* did in a political and administrative way, joined the East and West. They gathered up the scattered fragments of the world's thought into one system, just as the Roman Empire co-ordinated and regulated the various races and peoples of the Mediterranean Basin under one government. Other schools of thought did attract disciples, but Stoicism made a more general appeal, and had a stronger hold upon human thought and conduct than any other philosophic system of the age.

Nor are the reasons for this vigour far to seek. First of all, it was the one creative original system developed in a period of adaptation, selection, and imitation. Of course, much was borrowed from former systems; that was inevitable. But there was something distinctive, a positive contribution which this philosophy offered. And everything derived from other sources was thoroughly assimilated to it, and went to produce a strong, coherent whole. Secondly, it fitted in with the spirit of the age; it met the aspirations of its best men, and its moral code supplied a stimulus to conduct, a stimulus lacking in most previous and contemporary systems. And thirdly, it was catholic in its scope, for, while its emphasis, especially in its later development, was ethical, it kept within its perspective the whole universe, 'things visible and invisible'. Nothing to the Stoic (theoretically) was beneath his regard. The distinction between Greek and barbarian disappeared, and there being no actual commonwealth that satisfied his principles, the true Stoic looked upon his fellow-man of every race as, potentially at least, citizens of the Ideal Commonwealth, the City of God. It is not difficult to see many points of contact between this virile and aspiring system and the religion of Jesus Christ which ultimately absorbed its best features.

For the Stoic, as for Socrates, knowledge was attainable,

and to know the truth was to do it. The wise man and the virtuous man were identical. Here the Hellenic element in the system is exhibited, but in giving a moral colouring to wisdom, and in shifting its chief seat from the Reason to the Will, Stoicism shows its close affinity to the Semitic type of thinking [1] which is always more interested in conduct than in mental processes. Indeed most of the Hebrew prophets were men naturally Stoic, and preached instinctively the ethics of that system. The present writer has a strong feeling that the Hebraic element in Stoicism has never had justice done to it, and that the more fully its influence is recognized the more fully will the intellectual, spiritual, and moral life of the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman periods be understood. The exclusiveness of the Jew prevented him from securing wide approval, an approval which would otherwise probably have been extended to him on account of the grand simplicity of his faith, and the practicality of his ethical system. The Stoic, however, laboured under no such disadvantage. His propaganda was hindered by no rite of initiation, by no legal enactments jealously preserving racial purity and custom. He was free to gather converts where he would, and the practical nature of his system, emphasizing character and conduct rather than thought, had a strong appeal for honest men who were tired of, or were indifferent to, metaphysical quibbling, and yearned for a definite rule of life inspired by a motive they could understand.

This motive is to be found in the religious basis of Zeno's philosophy. I have already noted the unique religious spirit of Heraclitus. The prophet of Ephesus was nobly vindicated in the tenets of this most vigorous of post-Platonic schools. The Stoics derived their leading ideas of God and of the Universe from Heraclitus, and under

[1] Cf. Lightfoot, Dissertations, *Philippians: St. Paul and Seneca*, pp. 273 ff.

the clarifying influence of Platonic thought—for there is a strain of Platonism in Zeno and his followers [1]—they erected the Heraclitean fragments into a coherent system. 'Stoicism was an ethical religion tinged with "cosmic emotion". It became the expression of an absolute faith in divine providence and manly resignation to the order of Nature that, however fatalistic in expression, never paralysed the will.' [2] And this reverence and awe in the presence of 'the order of Nature' were due to a profound belief in the Immanence of God. They were thoroughgoing, spiritual [3] pantheists, and consequently in the succession of Heraclitus.

According to the Stoic theory, physics included every department of knowledge which did not come under the head of logic or ethics. There was no line of cleavage between what is sometimes called Natural Science and Metaphysics. It was merely the difference between the outward and the inward. For the Stoic, the material was no more than the form or semblance of the spiritual. The Universe may be traced back to elemental, all-pervasive fire, which is creative, energizing, and Divine. Here then is the First Cause. And this First Cause is permeated with a compelling and ordering Force which is the Logos. It abides with the First Cause but is the origin of all subsequent movement, action, and construction. From one point of view this is God-in-action, or, farther back, is potency for action; from the other, it is composed of innumerable germinating forces (σπερματικοὶ λόγοι) which are the seed-plots of coming entities. The primal fire condenses and dilates itself, if the terms are permissible, into four elements; and these generate all living things

[1] Which in the course of time became more pronounced.

[2] *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, art. 'Stoicism' (under Gk. Phil.), Shorey, vol. ix, p. 864.

[3] Seriously questioned by some.

from gods to the lowest form of vegetable existence. Each existence has its ruling part (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν). With gods and men it is νοῦς; with animals it is ψυχή; with plants it is φύσις. Nor are inanimate things left without a ruling principle—with them it is cohesion (ἕξις). All entities, therefore, possess something which gives them character, but which is derived from the Primal Source. Thus each entity is in some measure Divine, possessing a fragment of God. Of earthly creatures Man possesses most of God, but all possess something of Him. 'The whole universe is pervaded by deity in a graded scale; and God is related to the universe as soul to body.'[1]

When Plato speaks of the world-soul he seems to anticipate this Stoic development, although he is really more of a transcendentalist than a pantheist. The Attic master, on the whole, shrinks from the thought of pure Deity in close association with material things. Matter is for him an obstruction, a barrier, between the imprisoned human spirit and its true home, the invisible, imperishable, archetypal world. The Platonist thinks rather of rescuing the spiritual from the material; the Stoic of impregnating and permeating the material with the spiritual. Platonism emphasized God over against and above the universe; Stoicism witnesses for the Divine in the world, God's Presence in the created thing, and His interpenetration of it. Both views are true, and full truth is obtained by joining them together. But the time for such a conjunction had not yet arrived. It certainly was the time, however, for bringing God nearer to mankind. It is probable that, had not the Stoics familiarized the ancient world with the idea of God's Immanence, Sceptics and Epicureans would have captured the thinking men of the Graeco-Roman civilization, and 'the nations'[2] would have been so far

[1] E. V. Arnold, art. 'Stoics', in *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, vol. xi, p. 862.

[2] τὰ ἔθνη.

less prepared for the vivifying, energizing contact with the leaven. On the one hand would have lain the vast masses of heathenism, uninfluenced by any ennobling philosophy, sunk in an idolatry becoming grosser, more superstitious, more immoral with the passage of time. On the other would have stood a choice band of scoffers, the intellectuals of their day, thoroughgoing materialists, selfish and sensual, their culture and their enlightenment only tending to make them more dangerous to the moral and spiritual character of the simple and illiterate. The few scattered Platonists might never have survived, for it was Stoicism which gave heart and stimulus to idealists and ethical teachers, who could not accept its whole system of thought;[1] or if they had survived would have been *voces clamantium in deserto*. So far did the school of Zeno supply a standard to those who most severely criticized its specific tenets, that they themselves professed a rule of life which, in its effects, was indistinguishable from Stoicism.

While the popular view of Stoicism sees in it merely a system of ethics, a careful study of its teaching shows that its ethics and physics are closely related as effect to cause.[2] A material pantheism, or even a spiritual pantheism where its moral implications are not emphasized, encourages gross Nature-worship with a god and an altar for each of its multitudinous forms. It stimulates idolatry, and idol-worship too often shelters vice, and tends to moral degradation. Modern Hinduism is a striking illustration of these phenomena.[3] But Stoicism was a spiritual pantheism whose moral implications were stressed and enforced. And to such an extent was this done that 'the plain man' with no fondness for speculation was content to leave the more abstract teaching alone, and follow a code of conduct

[1] e. g. Philo, Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom, Maximus of Tyre.

[2] The *inwardness* of physics is spiritual, and this inwardness took the place of metaphysics.

[3] Monier-Williams, *Hinduism*, pp. 165–84.

which commended itself to his conscience and his reason. Nevertheless, the *raison d'être* of its ethics was its physics. Stoicism was in truth a philosophical system, but its philosophy was almost a religion[1]—and a religion of that fine quality where religious ideas and moral sanctions meet, and find in one another mutual support and justification.

Let us see how this was so. For the Stoic, the material universe is the Body of God. He, or It (since It was generally conceived as an Impersonal Power), is the originating principle, 'the Right Reason which pervades all things'. In other words it is the Logos animating the universe. As I have already indicated, the most material object bears the character of God, and ascending up the scale of creation, each higher stage possesses a higher degree of the Divine until man is reached. In his mind, or spirit, man has God within him in a way unique among created things. He has a guide whom he is to follow,[2] an internal oracle.[3] It is this which gives man his distinction and his greatness, this participation in the Divine Spirit. When St. Paul said to his Corinthian converts: 'Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?'[4] he was employing language which must have been familiar to them from its likeness to Stoic doctrine. Every one recognizes the doctrinal background of the Pauline utterance and the strength of the moral appeal based upon it. Similarly the Stoic teachers made their moral appeal upon the basis of their doctrine of God. By virtue of the divine germ within him man is in a pre-eminent way the son of God. 'He who has once observed with understanding the administration of the world, and learnt that the greatest and supreme and most comprehen-

[1] Glover, *Conflict of Religions*, p. 56.
[2] Cf. πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ στήρισόν με, Ps. li (LXX).
[3] Cf. Adam, *Vitality of Platonism* (*Hymn of Cleanthes*), pp. 137–8.
[4] 1 Cor. vi. 19; see also 1 Cor. iii. 16–17.

sive community is the system of men and God and that *from God come the seeds whence all things*, and *especially rational beings, spring*, why should that man not call himself a citizen of the world, . . . why not a *son of God* ? ' [1]

It is difficult for us who are Christians, and therefore urged to uprightness of life by a fuller, richer content given to the term, Son of God, to appreciate what this conception and its moral appeal meant to the educated pagan of the ancient world. It seems meagre and jejune to the modern mind, especially when it is linked up, as it always is, with the doctrine of the necessity of things. One might reasonably think that this fatalism would devitalize the motive extracted from the conception of divine sonship. No doubt here is to be found the weakness of the Stoic system of ethics, a weakness which can be traced back to its theology, if the term may be used. Yet there is much Christian theology which has lost itself in trying to solve the paradox between destiny and free-will, so we cannot afford to throw stones. But for us there is a way of escape ; for the Stoics there was none. Popular as Stoicism became, it is possible that but for this weakness it would have possessed a universal appeal. Certainly its fatalistic strain prevented Stoicism exerting the moral power it ought to have developed in its adherents for the correction of the political and social life of the times. There is little evidence that the Greek followers of the cult resisted, or attempted to resist, the autocratic tendencies of Macedon or Rome.[2] On the other hand, the Roman Stoics, in sentiment Republicans almost to a man, during their earlier period gallantly but unsuccessfully endeavoured to stem the current towards Caesarism.[3] In the later period they were content for the most part to utter their

[1] Epic., *D. I.*, quoted by Glover, *Conflict of Religions*, p. 38.

[2] There is, however, the case of Rhodes, and many of the successors to Alexander's Empire associated with Stoic teachers and must have been influenced by them.

[3] Bigg, *Church's Task*, p. 70.

protests and then die by their own, or the assassin's hand. Whatever his motive, Seneca, one of their greatest representatives, was willing to bask in the sunshine of the Imperial Court, though to his credit be it said, he resigned its favours willingly enough—methinks he doth protest too much[1]—and, when the summons came, died a quasi-voluntary death with stoical calm. Indeed Stoicism seems, in spite of its professed cosmopolitanism, to have despaired quite soon of the world-state, and to have confined its efforts to the reformation, and confirmation, of the individual. Yet if it did this, it effected as much as any other school of thought. It could do no more, for what the world needed, but did not have within itself, was a regenerative power which could 'make all things new'.[2]

There was something which Platonism had which Stoicism had not. Its thoroughgoing pantheism prevented it from offering any real suggestion of immortality. The finite spirit survives the body at longest till the conflagration at the end of the aeon, when apparently it is absorbed in the great Eternal Fire which is the First Principle, in other words, is God. Though couched in material phraseology, it is not to be inferred that the First Principle is a material substance. Here is another instance of the inadequacy of human speech to express thought when it is dealing with ultimate realities. But even so, it is not much inspiration—there is no great ground for hope and joyous expectation—to assure a man that after life's brave battle with temptation and difficulty his spirit will survive for a limited period, that then he will lose self-consciousness and individuality, and be swallowed up in an Impalpable, Impersonal, and Eternal Energy. Here then is another defect in Stoicism. Plato at least did encourage the hope of immortality: 'It behoves us to attempt to escape hence thither, as swiftly as possible; and this flight

[1] *Beata Vita*, 20. 3; 23. 1. [2] Rev. xxi. 5.

thither consists in a likeness to God as far as possible; and this likeness consists in becoming just and holy and wise.'[1] No merging, no absorption, is suggested, but the singularly Christian concept of a growing likeness to (not identity with) God. And likeness implies a compatibility and a capacity for the reception of gifts and powers from the One to Whom there is a likeness; just as the One full of Life and Energy and Goodness implies an object (or objects) upon whom to expend His (Its) gifts. And where else can this communication of Divine influence be expended but upon those who are like? This is Life Eternal, namely, to share in that communication, not to be absorbed in the One, but to be in union with Him. I hope I have not overstated Plato's theory of immortality and his doctrine of God. He is not consistent with himself, for remember he is speculating, not declaring revealed truth. But what I have said represents, I verily believe, his teaching in his highest moments.

But, because of his comparative poverty in theology, the Stoic possessed a wider appeal than the Platonist. Immanence is always easier to appreciate then Transcendence. Under the vesture of visible things, God is. Within our earthly frame God dwells; we are part of God. Here is something tangible, something with a basis of common sense. 'The plain man' can understand it. The Stoic had no metaphysics because in his view God and Creation, Spirit and Matter, were interwoven or fused together. No distinction was possible, Spirit hardens into Matter, and again Matter solves itself into Spirit. 'The plain man' hates metaphysics, and here was a system which had none. And besides, the theory endowed nature with a new significance and gave a new content and a new dignity to manhood. To live in accordance with nature was to live in accordance with God, and the God in man

[1] *Theaetetus*, 176 A, B; cited by von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, pp. 33–4.

bade him walk upright on his feet, and follow His leading. It was very noble and comparatively simple; at any rate the whole thing was coherent; it was all of one piece from its physics, through its ethics, to its logic.

To our minds the absence of the Eternal-Life motive is a most serious loss. But we must remember that we have almost two thousand years of the highest spiritual teaching as our background, and as our ever-present support and stay. No doubt there was a widespread longing among thoughtful pagans for life and continuity of individual existence beyond the grave; even in some of them a thirst after communion with an Eternal God. But they had no confidence that their aspirations in this direction would be satisfied; it could scarcely be called a hope. Accordingly, when Stoicism offered them an elevated, and yet reasonable, rule of life with the prospect of a limited survival after death, they embraced it with something like religious fervour as the best of all possible doctrines.

In Stoicism we have noted an element, and a very strong one, which is Semitic rather than Greek. The blending and intermixture of ideas which is thus implied is typical of the whole period stretching from the conquest of Alexander far into the Christian era. It was the age of eclecticism. The world had become Hellenized. It adopted Greek philosophy, Greek culture, and the Greek language, but it took its revenge. It tempered, some would say contaminated, all three with its own speculations, customs, and idioms, but it is more than probable that Hellenic civilization had already reached the perfection of which it was capable, and that the fusion which it now endured prolonged its life and service to humanity. Certainly its Semitic strain aided Stoicism in attaining popularity in the East, and, strange to say, in the West as well. And it was the same with other systems of thought. The infusion, or addition, of non-Hellenic elements gave them

a *locus standi* in an entourage which was no longer Greek but cosmopolitan. Not that many of them deserved it. The cult which has occupied our attention for so many pages almost stands alone in its coherence, originality, and completeness. Most of the others were not organic, but consisted of a mass of ill-assorted, mutually contradictory fragments which fell apart as soon as the hand which had painfully pieced them together was removed. Their little systems had their day; they had their day and ceased to be.[1]

CHAPTER VIII

THE ALEXANDRIAN SCHOOL

But the mode of thought which now comes under review has great and distinctive merits. Philo Judaeus and his fellow-Alexandrians were not in themselves remarkably creative, nor were their speculations noted for lucidity. They shared the prevailing vice of their times, and picked up ideas from various and conflicting systems, and made use of them for their own purposes. They were confirmed eclectics. Philosophically they were unsound because they introduced into their metaphysics an authority other than that of reason. On this very account, however, they are important for our purpose since, though we may lament the decadence of philosophy, whereof the rise of the Hellenists of Alexandria was one of many symptoms, we cannot but welcome the confession of cultured minds—the heirs of an intellectual struggle of centuries—that mental processes, unaided, lead humanity but a little way towards God. Small justice has been done to these Alexandrian Jews until recent years, though there is no doubt that Philo left his impress on Alexandrian thought,

[1] Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, Prologue (adapted).

and traces of his influence can be found in Christianity up to the period of the Great Councils, as well as in the later speculations of the Neo-Platonist. In some respects he may be regarded as a pioneer of Neo-Platonism,[1] though it does not seem to have been his ambition to found any school of thought. His obsession was to commend the faith of his fathers to a world sunk in idolatry and superstition. In fact he was moved by a strong missionary spirit to communicate what he had for the sake of others; a spirit which ran counter to all the prejudices of his race, but was typical of the times and his native city. It is one of the ironies of life that contemporaneously with his noble but abortive efforts a life-giving Force of which he seems unconscious should have been imparted to the world out of the Mother City of Judaism.

Standing on the secure ground of Jewish theism, and casting about for a means of commending his faith to an unbelieving world, he gathered out of the vast complex of Grecian and Hellenistic thought, to which he with all other Hellenists had fallen heir, whatever seemed in his judgement to harmonize with the Mosaic revelation. 'Pledged to no sect, he culled whatever fruits attracted him; and Pythagorean, Platonic, Peripatetic, and Stoical doctrines all exercised their influence in the formation of his opinions.'[2] Nevertheless the chief ingredients of his philosophy were (1) Judaism, as the touchstone of all the rest, (2) Platonism, and (3) Stoicism.

Possibly to some minds even the commonplace efforts of imitative thinkers are more worthy of consideration than the speculations of those who use some basis of, what is to them, revealed truth. The latter have deserted philosophy for religion. They have not the true spirit of the

[1] Especially in his mysticism, see Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, vol. i, p. 14 ff.

[2] Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, vol. i, p. 18.

metaphysical explorer. Now these criticisms are sound enough but—to what point of certitude has speculative philosophy led us? If assurance upon ultimate realities is the thing desiderated, the results of rational inquiry are both baffling and disappointing. Plato reached in his best moments to a great height of speculative grandeur, but the lofty plane was immediately abandoned by his brilliant successor, Aristotle, who frankly could not breathe at such a dizzy altitude. Cynics, Sceptics, Epicureans multiplied —men who said they could not know, or did not know, or did not care, who guided their energies in directions where inquiry might be useful. The speculative element in Stoicism was supported by, and tolerated for, its admirable code of ethics. The world was sick of speculation for its own sake. The Greek mind had exhausted itself in metaphysical research and had received no reward, that is, nothing which commended itself as incontrovertible, or which touched the life of men and made it better, happier, and more hopeful. Probably the view of Lewes is the correct one,[1] that the history of philosophy teaches us that metaphysical exploration is useful in revealing to us the limits of the finite mind and in exercising the mental faculties, but is otherwise barren of results.

Throughout the Hellenistic period the trend is towards religion. Under Oriental influences, thinkers are beginning to mistrust their own mental processes. They are either seeking for a revelation, or if they are fortunate enough to possess one, they submit their speculations to be tested by it and employ their philosophical theories to interpret it. This is the method of Philo and his friends. They never questioned the Mosaic revelation. It was for them a matter of faith not of inquiry, but they felt that the revelation lent itself to philosophical interpretation. Philo

[1] Lewes, *History of Philosophy* (passim), but especially vol. i, pp. 377, 383–4.

found this apparatus of exposition chiefly in the Platonic and Stoic modes of thought. Where the Mosaic revelation was incomplete he inserted, congruously enough, elements from the Academy or the Porch, or indeed from any philosophical system which commended itself to him. The resulting structure, in some respects rambling and insecure, was a philosophical religion not, like that of the Stoics or the later Neo-Platonists, a religious philosophy.[1]

Naturally Philo, as a believer in the Transcendent Deity, seized upon Plato's idea of the Good, and the language which he employs, in order to express in philosophic form what the Law and the Prophets taught about God.[2] Whatever was lacking in the way of Personality, of colour and of life, he supplied so far as he could from the Jewish theism in which he had been nurtured. The hierarchy of ideas, which was so marked a feature of Platonic thought, becomes a hierarchy of powers, moving intermediately between the essential God and the created Cosmos.[3] These, according to subject treated (e. g. Old Testament exegesis, metaphysics, or ethics), have different designations applied to them. Sometimes they are angels, sometimes virtues, sometimes they are comprehensively embraced under the term Logos. His theories hang together well enough; they form a system of a sort, but his unsystematic method of exposition and his alternation of terms, sometimes synonymous, sometimes not quite so, tend to confusion. Moreover, when a man combines in his proper self the different rôles of prophet, mystic, rabbi, and philosopher, it is rather difficult to follow him.

It is not, however, difficult to trace his indebtedness to Stoicism, which gave to him in the Logos doctrine some-

[1] W. R. Inge, 'Alex. Theol.' in *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, vol. i, pp. 308–9.

[2] Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, vol. i, pp. 59–61, 64.

[3] Ib., vol. ii, p. 89.

thing which lay, perhaps implicit, in the Platonic theory of ideas, but which had hitherto merely given an impulse to pantheistic conceptions. Philo, and other Hellenists[1] like the writer of the Book of Wisdom, were too strictly theistic, in other words were too devoutly Jewish, to accept the thoroughgoing pantheism of Zeno and his followers. The God of Moses, of the Pentateuch, and of the prophets could find no place in such a system. He was God of remote and awful Majesty, not to be seen or approached save under veil and symbol and messenger.[2] But the very fact that this Transcendent God did communicate with men, spoke through some, and controlled the mass by their means, gave them a Law which should not be broken, and shaped the destiny of the people for high and spiritual ends in the face of their secular ruin, suggested that this Transcendence was modified or complemented by some attribute which bridged the gulf between God and man. But how was this to be expressed philosophically? Where Platonism partially failed, Stoicism was to give the answer. The Eternal Logos permeating, conjoining, and sustaining all things,[3] immanent and yet having His (Its) Source in God—this was the answer. Stoicism, with its exuberant pantheism corrected by the Transcendence of Plato, equalled Jewish monotheism. So Philo thought.

But whether unknowingly, or of set purpose, Philo had enriched the idea of God. By combining in one system the characteristic features of the two most religious philosophies of the ancient world, he had come, I suppose, as close to the truth as human reason could carry any man. It is true that he worked out his system on the basis of

[1] Aristobulus was a Peripatetic; see Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 30, note 2. The Book of Wisdom was probably written under Platonic or Stoic influences, see Oesterley, *Books of the Apocrypha*, p. 458.

[2] Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, vol. ii, p. 147 ff.

[3] Von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, p. 45.

Jewish monotheism. That fact may derogate from his originality, but, after all, Plato employed all the culture of his time to aid him in his researches; the thoughts and opinions which he had inherited, or which surrounded him. If, in addition to such aids, a man possesses a living faith, blessed be he! Let him use it in the highest of all quests, the pursuit of eternal truth. At any rate, such a possession does not invalidate his speculations, though it does tend to remove him from the category of the philosopher to that of the theologian.

Let this suffice for Philo. In the preceding section his teaching and its significance have been discussed, if not adequately, at least with considerable fulness. The two sections taken together present a picture of a man who, perhaps more than any other, is typical of the amalgam of Jewish faith and Hellenic thought. So long as these two elements remained apart, Jewish faith could advance no further, and, as we have demonstrated, Hellenic thought became increasingly sterile. A conjunction of the two, as in all the Eastern World, so especially at Alexandria, produced a movement, a semblance of life, new forms of thought, new possibilities of speculation along productive lines. There was, however, nothing vital about it. Greece and Palestine were both worked out, and fusion merely reduced the progress of decay. It could not arrest it entirely. Only one thing could do that. Man with the aid of a strong, vital religion, or man with the assistance of centuries of culture, and with the instrument of human thought improved to the utmost delicacy and subtlety—man, as Hebrew or as Hellene, was thrown back upon himself. Vital Force somehow and from somewhere must make these dry bones live, or to change to the familiar figure of our thesis, the leaven must be hid in the measures of meal till the whole is leavened—transformed from dry meal into wholesome bread. Meantime, in the most natural

way, by mutual migration, by the breaking down of local barriers, by the Hellenizing efforts of Ptolemies and Seleucids, by propaganda like that of the Jewish Alexandrians, by the interchange of commodities, and of thought, and later, by a sort of world-consciousness (as opposed to mere provincialism) which the Empire of Rome developed through its centralizing policy, the ancient civilization was preparing itself for the greatest infusion of power it had ever received.

CHAPTER IX

PREPARATION OF THE MASSES

Nor was the preparation confined to the wise and learned. It is true that most of the present section has been devoted to the speculations of various philosophers. And I have followed this course deliberately. First of all, because what the wise man thinks to-day, the world will think to-morrow. In other words the thinkers are the leaders, and therefore the proper representatives, of their society. Especially is this the case in Hellenic or Hellenistic social conditions, where intellectual capacity commanded wider respect than in any other environment before or since. And this brings me naturally to my second reason for adopting this plan, the pre-eminence of Greece in the realms of thought. This is the Glory of Hellas—that for many centuries, under the guidance of one philosopher and then another, or, as in the days of efflorescence, of several simultaneously, the human mind set forth on its voyage of discovery. To Greece the world is indebted, among other things, for diffusing a permanent interest in rational investigation, for inventing a method under which such investigation should be conducted, for constructing a science based upon rational instincts common

to intelligent men. Besides all this, Hellenic thought prepared the ground and laid the foundations of physical science. It erected a system of ethics—or rather several, which tended more and more to approximate—out of man's innate ideas of right and wrong. And it did all this by sheer intellectual hard work. I do not mean that other faculties than those of pure Reason had no part in the achievement. It is impossible (practically) to docket, as in pigeon-holes, the moral, rational, and spiritual powers of human nature when engaged in such tasks as were the preoccupation of the great men of Athens, or of Alexandria. But I do mean that, for the most part, these men laid claim to no revelation, were supported by no faith, except that to which their researches led them, and yet reached out into the unknown without any chart but what they themselves, or their predecessors, could provide through the processes of the human mind. It was a great achievement, and it was wrought by individuals in the face of the gross idolatry and superstition of the masses who were generally antipathetic, and sometimes actively intolerant. Greece is remembered, not by its peasants of Arcadia and Boeotia, but by its intellectual leaders. If Palestine is marked by spiritual intuition, and Rome by political sagacity, Hellas, as represented by her distinguished men, stands supreme in the world of thought. And this is my defence for occupying so much space in the examination of the philosophical systems of individuals rather than in the study of the multitude.

Not that the multitude is to be despised anywhere, or at any time, least of all in Greece. There is much evidence to show that in Athens culture and intellectual interest were more widespread than in any city of ancient or modern times. The Lacedaemonians are praised by Socrates in the *Protagoras*, not alone for their proverbial taciturnity, but for the directness, vigour, and pregnancy

of their words when moved to express their thought. Such qualities are marks of a well-trained mind. The average of intelligence in Alexandria must have been very high and its culture permeative since it infected so thoroughly the large Jewish population settled in its midst. No doubt the rude hind of the country-side was ignorant and provincial, but probably less so than the Irish peasant, or the rough farmer of the Middle West, or the logger of the New Hampshire woods. There was much of an educative value in the festivals, social gatherings, and games held under the shadow of the gods themselves. The inhabitants of Elis, which was remote and rustic enough, had the privilege of witnessing, and of sharing in, the great athletic contests of Olympia, where the flower of Greek manhood assembled at stated periods. The sense of Hellenic unity, overriding the variations of manners and of culture in Greeks gathered from points as far distant from one another as Syracuse and Byzantium, must have raised the general level of intelligence, and the appreciation of things above and beyond the common drudgery of everyday life. With the town-dweller the standard of appreciation was remarkably high. 'A quotation from Homer or from a tragic poet was apposite on all occasions, and in every kind of society.'[1] Dio Chrysostom found in a Greek colony of the Borysthenitae that almost all the settlers knew the *Iliad* by heart.[2] Besides the thorough knowledge of the masterpieces of Greek literature which is thus illustrated, familiarity with the principles of dialectic and with the history of philosophy was widely diffused. The jarring tenets of rival schools of thought would be debated at the baths and in the market-place. 'There were grammar schools in almost every town',[3] and the proportion of those who advanced further was very considerable. The Stoics

[1] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 30.
[2] Ib., p. 30.
[3] Ib., p. 35.

laid stress upon education, and most of it passed into their hands.[1] More than the members of any other cult they moulded the thoughts and morals of the Graeco-Roman world and prepared it to receive the teaching of the Apostolic Church, to which Stoicism in some of its thought and most of its practice quite closely approximated.

For the rest—there was a general feeling of pessimism and discouragement. Except for the downtrodden and unfortunate, of whom every period of history has its share, life was comfortable enough, but it was uninspiring. Men felt the lack of creative energy; speculative thought was dead; except among the peasantry, religion was moribund. Religious ideas were floating about, and religious sentiment was strong among the best of thinking people, but there was no guide, no authority, no conviction which the experience of life enabled to survive. The healthy avenues of public service were barred, except as regards the inferior offices, to all save those of Italian birth,[2] and even those, who by right of citizenship were eligible for high office, felt less incentive in serving a bureaucracy than their forefathers in serving a free state. This had an enervating effect upon moral and spiritual energy, already lowered by lack of religious purpose. Is it any wonder that the Mystery Religions, appealing as they did to the emotions of curiosity and awe which the popular religion no longer satisfied, and attracting poetic and artistic natures by their elaborate rites, gathered adherents from all classes, except the very sceptical and the very ignorant? 'The

[1] Arnold, art. 'Stoics', in *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, pp. 860 ff.

[2] Roman citizenship was gradually extended, and finally was conferred upon all the free males of the Empire by the Emperor Caracalla, A. D. 212. See *Dict. of Class. Antiq.*, Nettleship and Sandys. Citizenship before that date could be purchased 'with a great sum', or was frequently bestowed upon individuals for distinguished services. See Acts xxii. 28; also Ramsay, *St. Paul, the Traveller and Roman Citizen*, pp. 29–39.

return to life of Osiris and Attis is embodied in grotesque myths, and these become the centre of an elaborate ritual through which there is conveyed to their votaries the hope of Immortality.' The sympathy thus generated between worshipper and the worshipped ' is the result of sensuous impression more or less artificially produced. . . . It depends on . . . (the) machinery of pompous processions, ascetic prescriptions, a ceremonial celebrated at dead of night, when the darkness was suddenly illuminated by the flashing of a torch.' [1] Some of these mystery-cults contained exceedingly gross elements; others had purified and refined these away.[2] The lofty purpose of Orphism was to secure the deliverance of the soul from the prison-house of the body, but other Mysteries, especially those of Oriental origin which came later on the scene, under the mask of a religious motive, encouraged licentiousness. Be this as it may, the widespread popularity of mystic rites, the craving for communion with the Divine by discipline, initiation, and orgiastic frenzy, the longing for release from the circle of this world, all bore witness to the soul-hunger of humanity which nothing devised by man could adequately appease.

CHAPTER X

ST. PAUL

The Hellenistic Jews were the bridge between Judaism and the rest of the world. Over this bridge were exchanged the treasures of religious faith and philosophical thought, but the barter was becoming barren and unprofitable, when a merchantman of Tarsus fared across the bridge, offering to the world merchandise of incalculable value and exceeding beauty. Saul of Tarsus was no ordinary man.

[1] Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, pp. 214–15.
[2] Ib., Prolegomena, p. 11.

The powers of his mind, the force of his character, and his statesmanlike vision would have distinguished him in any generation and in any walk of life. Added to these great qualifications, he possessed a longing for righteousness, and an energy in seeking after it. No race but the Hebrew race could have produced him, and the Hebrew race and culture is not sufficient to account for him. In fact it was Judaism responding to the world-culture of the day which gave us Saul, who when he became established in his life's work, 'designated himself a Roman, born at Tarsus, and named Paul'.[1] Henceforth[2] this was the name which he employed, and by which he was known, throughout his missionary journeys.

But what was there for such a man to do in the age in which he was born? I have taken pains, in many of the preceding pages, to establish the general barrenness and unproductivity of the age. The soil was prepared but still waiting for the seed. There was no scope for greatness, moral and spiritual greatness, not even of secular greatness. There was indeed the greatness of rank and office, but the Empire had killed out all initiative and power, except what it could attach to itself. I sometimes wonder what careers men like D'Israeli and Spinoza—typical great men of the Hebrew race—would have had in the Augustan, Claudian, or Flavian periods. D'Israeli had brilliant faculties as a statesman—vision, versatility, and address; Spinoza had great gifts adapted to philosophical inquiry. We know what politics led to in the fate of many a stern republican at Rome, or in the hopeless rebellion of the wrong-headed patriots of the last days of Jerusalem. If one wanted something safer and more ignoble, there is the wily subservience to Pagan authority of a Herod or a Josephus. Metaphysical inquiry on the basis of the

[1] Ramsay, *St. Paul, the Traveller and Roman Citizen*, p. 83.
[2] Acts xiii. 9.

Mosaic Law was open, but to what good purpose was effort in that direction? Philo had already covered the ground with thoroughness, if not with method, and there was nothing more to do. It was futile to go about the world telling men that the finest Hellenic philosophy had points of contact with the faith of a barbaric people. It would only awaken at the best a mild intellectual curiosity, and at the worst men would say quite rightly that such information led nowhere. If ethics should be the subject of propaganda, many earnest Pagans would claim that Stoicism had nothing to learn from Judaism. If religion were the substance of missionary enterprise, it would be hard to convince the follower of a mystery-cult that the cold legalism of the Pharisee, and the chilling atmosphere of the Synagogue, were preferable to the warm, yet ennobling, worship of Orpheus and Eleusis. No, Spinoza,[1] like D'Israeli, would find no fruitful occupation in the first century A. D., unless he came into touch with something that might easily be overlooked.

Saul of Tarsus was Spinoza-D'Israeli, plus something great of his own, and yet, would this super-addition have made much difference? In the face of the situation, which has been described at such length, could spiritual energy, zeal for righteousness, intellectual powers, and far-seeing statesmanship avail anything? The Graeco-Roman world was spiritually and intellectually exhausted; the Jewish world was in a state of arrested development. All avenues had been explored and proved themselves blind alleys; the Mosaic Law (with accretions) oppressed, but did not deliver. There was a wealth of material, a width of opportunity, but, till now, no power to utilize, and no message to proclaim. In a few vivid strokes St. Paul reveals the hopelessness of his early efforts and aspirations as a devout

[1] Of Spinoza Matthew Arnold said, 'his foot is in the *vita vera*, his eye on the beatific vision' (Spinoza, *Essays on Criticism*).

Jew;[1] if, without a revelation, he had turned to the Gentiles would the result have been any more hopeful? Was there much profit in changing from a Jewish Rabbi into a Stoic or Platonic philosopher? Indeed there was nothing in himself, or in the world at large, to justify any alteration of policy, to make worth while an active movement to relieve the spiritual distress of the heathen races. He had nothing with which to relieve it. To an aspiring soul like that of Saul of Tarsus, it was a dead world, and efforts to resuscitate a corpse are waste of time.

Saul was a Hellenistic Jew. I know this has been disputed, and notably by one of the leading theologians and scholars of the day,[2] but it is difficult to appreciate the grounds on which the denial is based. He was born in the Hellenized city of Tarsus, of a family which, so far as we can gather, had long been domiciled there. It is true he is more Hebraic than many Hellenists, more so than Philo, or than that other great Alexandrian, the distinguished convert to the faith, and his personal rival, Apollos. This can be accounted for by the Palestinian education he received 'at the feet of Gamaliel',[3] which was superimposed upon the early training given him in the Synagogues of Tarsus, and upon the Hellenized culture he inhaled as instinctively as he breathed the air of his native city. It is true he harangued the crowd at Jerusalem 'in the Hebrew dialect',[4] which means Aramaic, but he also proclaimed the faith in good Hellenistic Greek on the Areopagus at Athens before the most intellectually select audience in the world. His letters do at times betray the queer twists and turns of Rabbinic thought; on the other hand they are saturated with the ideas and terminology

[1] Rom. vii. 7 ff. If this passage is not purely autobiographical, which I am inclined to think it is, it nevertheless contains a strong personal element.

[2] Headlam, *St. Paul and Christianity*, especially pp. 12–18.

[3] Acts xxii. 3.

[4] Ib., xxi. 40.

of the Graeco-Roman world. His quotations from, and references to, the Old Testament show that he was thoroughly familiar with its Greek version, the Septuagint.[1] St. Stephen was apprehended, tried, and put to death at the instigation of Hellenistic Jews, and Saul actively co-operated with them, which he would not have done had he not been identified with that branch of the race. It may be objected that he seems to have been living in Jerusalem, and to have been associated with 'the chief priests' in the persecution of the Church. But it must be remembered he was still 'a young man',[2] that he was possibly remaining at Jerusalem to assimilate the choicest morsels of Rabbinic teaching before returning to his accustomed entourage. There were several Hellenistic synagogues in the Mother City to supply the religious needs of just such as he.[3] To say that his association with the chief priests makes him a Palestinian is as reasonable as to say that his association with them made him a Sadducee.[4] For they were Palestinians and Sadducees. And we know, if we know anything, that Saul was a convinced Pharisee. The fact of the matter is that the priestly party, impelled by whatever convictions they had, by their prejudices and their self-interest, were intent on stamping out this new heresy, and were ready to employ Hellenistic Pharisees, or anybody else, for their purpose.

It may be granted, however, that Saul was a bilingual Hellenist, whose ability to express himself in Aramaic was almost equal to his fluency in Greek. Though his knowledge of Hebrew is to be assumed rather than proved, it is not an unfair inference that from Gamaliel, and possibly other teachers, he learned the sacred language of his race,

[1] Headlam, *St. Paul and Christianity*, p. 15.

[2] Acts vii. 58.

[3] Acts vi. 9.

[4] The executive authority rested mainly with the Sadducaic party.

together with its theology. But he learned it as moderns learn the Classics, or rather as a postulant for Roman Orders learns ecclesiastical Latin, that is, as an implement of culture, or for religious purposes, not for common, everyday use. As for the language of his citizenship, though we have no direct evidence on the point, it is probable that he had some degree of familiarity with it. He was at least alive to the freedom and privilege which he had inherited,[1] and his statesmanlike mind grasped the significance of the Empire and the 'pax Romana'. Summing up, we may say that Saul was bilingual, that he possessed Hellenistic culture, that he was educated under the best Rabbinic auspices, that he was familiar with the intense conservatism of Jerusalem, and at the same time conversant with the more liberal, and laxer, life of a city like Tarsus, where Jews concealed their prejudices, and mingled with their Gentile neighbours whose social life and ideas insensibly reacted on their own, and whose language they habitually employed, and that he possessed and recognized the value of Roman citizenship. Thus by capacity, endowments, and opportunity, Saul was eminently fitted to impress his generation.

Yet this wonderfully equipped person confesses, with strong feeling and considerable detail, that his early manhood had been spent in vain and fruitless effort. With unerring instinct he fastens upon the noblest thing within his reach, the Mosaic Law, and its accumulated embroidery. He tries to live up to it, but finds no satisfaction, no peace. Indeed, according to his later view, it is a bondage unto death. He does not seem to have tried anything else. What else was there? To one who knew the Law as Saul did, the noblest conjectures of Gentile teachers were will-o'-the-wisps hovering over a measureless morass. The Law at least came from God.[2]

[1] Acts xvi. 37–9. [2] Rom. vii. 12–14; also Gal. iii. 19, 21, 24.

It were an interesting psychological study, and possibly a most useful one, to analyse and weigh the impulses, motives, and aspirations of the brilliant young Pharisee during these (seemingly) wasted years. Unfortunately the material is scanty, though it is remarkably vivid and realistic. It consists of the references in the Lucan history to the pre-conversion days and sundry allusions in the speeches in Acts and the Pauline letters. This does not suffice for a psychological study, but it supplies enough to furnish light on one or two points.

To some, the sudden conversion appears inexplicable. Even giving due consideration to the power and glory of the revelation, it seems inexplicable. It will remain so, while we cling to the view that it was sudden. I believe that it was so only on the surface. Subconsciously Saul was in a receptive mood. Doubtless at first the dissatisfaction was solely with himself. He had a standard, an ideal of righteousness, which he could not begin to reach. We may be sure he was never content with a negative, or literal, righteousness. Later on his internal unrest was aggravated and irritated by the appearance and rapid growth of a body of religious persons, most of them of no particular social or intellectual distinction in the Jewish theocracy. The leaders of this little community made no secret of their faith, but on the contrary were active in proselytizing, and were meeting with astonishing success. These men of meagre education and no prestige were brave in the face of the wise and learned of their nation, and spoke with power and authority. Probably he felt the contrast between the vacillation and worldly caution of the rulers, and the inspired devotion and determined courage of the despised sect, whose members seemed more cheerful as repression, and then persecution, fell upon them.[1] They had something vital which the orthodox had

[1] Acts iv. 22; v. 17–41; vi. 12–14; vii. 57–8; viii. 1–3.

not. *He felt it though he did not yet think it.* He must have ascertained the source of their power in the heated debates which were now frequently taking place with the pestilent sect which was already including within itself not only Palestinian but Hellenistic Jews. It was too bad that a man of parts and power like Stephen should fall away. By reason of his spiritual insight and persuasive eloquence, this man who knew the Law had great influence with his Greek-speaking fellow-countrymen. And now this cultured Hellenist was magnifying the loving purpose of God at the expense of God's people! It was surely wrong to abase national pride and self-satisfaction at a time when it behoved all true sons of Abraham to maintain the value of their birthright, and to present a united front before the Pagan world! To speak against this Holy Place and the customs of the fathers, to depreciate the sacred treasures of the race, and erect a false contrast between legal scrupulousness and inward piety, was cutting at the roots of Judaism. Prejudice perverted St. Stephen's true meaning, but the true meaning nevertheless sank into the heart, and germinated other truths which grew and developed rapidly when the barrier of legalism was removed.

Is it not more reasonable, and more in accordance with the Apostle's autobiographical allusions, to assume that the conversion was anticipated and prepared for by a spiritual conflict of some duration? Is it not natural to suppose that the young man who consented to Stephen's death was already struggling to keep down the conviction that Stephen was right? The outburst of fanatical zeal which followed the martyrdom is quite in character. Men of tempestuous temperament act like that. They are not for half-measures, compromise, or conciliation. With his intellect and his training he could not fail to grasp the implications of the new teaching, and he was appalled by them. To a strong, virile personality, convictions are

bought at a price. He was not of the 'straitest sect', because it was easy to be a Pharisee. He tells us himself it was the hardest of all possible tasks, an impossible task, to live up to the standard of righteousness that was according to the Law. No, he was a Pharisee because he was convinced the Pharisaic outlook was the right one. This conviction was supported by everything which, as a man and as a Jew, he esteemed precious—inherited pride of race, the respect of co-religionists, the ties of kindred and friendship, the highest and most reasonable appeals of self-interest. And now the leaven was secreted in his heart and was fermenting and seething up to the surface, threatening to change everything, to cast out of his life all he had held most dear which could not be assimilated to its own character. It was against this Saul struggled. During the last stage of the Pharisaic period of his life he was not merely fighting the hated Nazarenes; he was fighting against himself. As the conflict was intense and bitter, so the victory was complete and overwhelming. The new conviction conquered the old ones.

This new conviction can be traced back through the substance of Stephen's preaching, through the altered life and character of the members of the young community, through the doctrine and witness of the Apostles to the Vital Force which has occupied so much of our attention (Part I). But Saul's conversion was not a mere subjective response to the Vital Force thus presented. Unless we are prepared to set aside the Apostolic history and the Pauline letters as imaginative fiction, we are compelled to recognize that St. Paul himself, and through him the Church of his time, believed that the experience, of which he could never even write without emotion, was not simply 'an up-rush from the sub-conscious but a down-rush from the super-conscious'. In other words, that Jesus of Nazareth, Whom he was persecuting in the person

of His disciples, appeared to him on the Damascus road. St. Paul believed, and those to whom he disclosed the matter believed, that he had received an Objective Revelation of the Lord in Glory. It is significant also, as evidence for one of the minor points we have been discussing, that the zealous young Pharisee recognized immediately the Person of the One revealed; and addressed Him as Lord. Thus, in spite of superficial hostility, he was in so receptive a mood that antagonism entirely vanished, and the enemy of Christ became His devoted servant and, later on, His most illustrious Apostle.[1]

Did this new conviction coming to the birth with the vision on the way to Damascus, developed and enriched by subsequent experiences, though never afterwards altered in direction and character—did this new conviction make much difference to Saul of Tarsus, and, through him, did it make much difference to the world in which he lived and taught? The question is a twofold one. In the case of an ordinary man a new conviction will affect his environment in proportion to its intensity and sincerity. In the case of a man with the outstanding powers of Saul the influence will be proportionately greater, and the deeper the experience, the more profound his influence. There is no doubt in the Apostle's mind as to the greatness of the personal upheaval caused by the revelation. It demanded of him a complete reversal of attitude and service. He had always been a sincere servant of God, but he acquired a new conception of his duty and its scope. Onlookers were amazed when at Damascus 'he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God',[2] and said, 'Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem?'[3] The rumour was carried to the disciples in Judaea 'that he which persecuted us in

[1] A. B. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, pp. 34–5.
[2] Acts ix. 20. [3] Ib., ix. 21.

times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed '.[1] For Saul, however, it was a far more radical change than that which is indicated by this first external impression of astonishment. For him it meant ' that it pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles '.[2]

His gospel was the same gospel preached by the Twelve. It is built on the same historical basis, with the added personal relation which puts it on the same evidential level as theirs. He is as competent to speak of Jesus in all His aspects as those who ' companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us '.[3] The ' foundations ' of his doctrine ' are the death and resurrection of Christ, and these were facts with which he had become acquainted by human testimony '. What happened to himself ' was a revelation from God which made him accept that faith as true and realize all that it implied '.[4] That was it. It was not that the substance of the Gospel changed in St. Paul's hands, but its range and operation were immeasurably widened, and he logically followed its implications. Of course it received a colouring, so definite a colouring that St. Paul's attitude of mind has received his name and is called Paulinism ; but every strong thinker, every spiritual leader, unconsciously puts himself into his message. Christ came in regard to the Law (but in regard to all things natural as well), not to destroy but to fulfil. Part of the glory of the Gospel is the richness and variety of the human character and experience which it embraces.

It is, however, foreign to my purpose to examine the Pauline theology. Suffice it to say that the Pauline theology (to my mind and knowledge) is the original Gospel absorbed by a man of powerful intellect and extra-

[1] Gal. i. 23. [2] Gal. i. 15–16 (R.V.).
[3] Acts i. 21. [4] Headlam, *St. Paul and Christianity*, p. 198.

ordinary spiritual capacity who understood its principles, realized its implications, and then applied them, as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, to a world that was dying for need of a Saviour. The leaven acted upon St. Paul and through him upon the Gentile world. As Saul of Tarsus his influence would have been negligible and his life a failure; as Paul, the ambassador of Jesus Christ, he becomes the most fruitful personality in the Apostolic Age, and in all the subsequent history of the Christian Church. It was he who under the providence of God made the Church actually—what it was potentially—catholic in its range, in its appeal, and in its aim. Henceforth it could not go back upon itself. It was committed to all nations and kindred and tongues and peoples. Humanly speaking the original leaders of the Church could not have done this. In making them what they were, the leaven had done its work. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. Saul was an agent fitted to the work that was needed, fitted by genius, talents, position, and opportunity. Therefore the leaven touched him also, and taking up and transmuting the original elements of his mind and character, sent him forth to convert the world not to himself but to Christ.

St. Paul is very careful about that. However much 'Paulinism' bulks in the minds of modern critics and theologians, to the Apostle himself it meant very little. He was scarcely conscious of it. The world-wide mission of the Church was not Paulinism; it was inherent in its organic life. He brought it to the surface and pledged himself to carry it out. The timidity, or caution, of the Palestinian Christians he overcame so far, that they gave their approval to his mission, and to those associated with him, at the first Council of the Church.[1] In the face of Judaism he established the liberty of the Gospel, at what

[1] Acts xv. 4 ff.

pains and peril to himself personally the references in his letters testify. The purpose of the Epistle to the Galatians is to emphasize the catholicity of the Church and its freedom from Jewish legalism. If the writer is jealous of his authority, here or elsewhere, it is chiefly because he recognizes it to be the buttress of the principles revealed to him by Christ, and put into operation according to His Will. He always rests his authority, his inspiration, and his power upon Jesus Christ. He is the Master; Paul is the servant, or ambassador, or steward. The titles and descriptions he gives of himself are many, but they are all subordinate to, and dependent upon, the Lord of Grace and of Life.

The controversy with Judaism was the greatest struggle of St. Paul's life as a Christian teacher and leader. It was not only, though it was primarily, a conflict with members of 'the household of faith'; but it was a conflict with those individuals reinforced by the blind prejudice and fanatical zeal of unbelieving Jews. While the principles of catholicity had been recognized both in word and act by the early generation of Christian leaders, it was St. Paul who not only rescued the principle from oblivion, or from the half-hearted admission accorded to it in Palestinian circles, but put it logically and consistently into practice. The original Twelve state facts and truths; they do not explain them or argue about them. But St. Paul coming from outside, and according to the times, a trained thinker, reflects upon the substance of the faith which had been made so dear to him by the circumstances of his conversion, and constructs a theology.[1] Almost the first problem to think out is the relation of the Law to the Gospel. It is a burning practical question, but it has to be based upon principle, and has therefore to be thought

[1] Sanday, art. 'Paul', in *Dict. of Christ and the Gospels* (Hastings), vol. ii, p. 886.

out and argued on the firmest grounds, if any permanent conclusion is to be reached. How ably the Apostle conducted the case for catholicity may be judged by the fact that the Judaizing menace—perhaps the greatest danger which ever confronted the Church—ceased to be a menace, even before the end of St. Paul's life.[1]

The feeling grows upon me, that in the Judaistic controversy we have the key to most of the distinctive characteristics of St. Paul's teaching, that which differentiated it from all other teaching, before or since. It came so near to himself, this question of the Law and the Gospel: it was the very struggle which he had fought out in his own person, and of which his conversion was the climax. His individual experience was the microcosm of the conflict in which the Church as a whole was engaged, and in which he was heart and soul engaged on the side of the forces that had conquered in his own breast. He knew from many years of honest effort the fruitlessness of the works of the Law—how impossible it was for a man to find salvation in legal righteousness. On the other hand he knew the power of Christ and the love of Christ. They had been revealed to him with such intensity and vividness that they made in him 'a new creation', and that absolute trust and confidence in the Saviour induced a relationship with Him and established it. Hence arose the doctrine of Grace as opposed to Law, and justification by Faith as opposed to justification by works only. These doctrines were part and parcel of his polemic with the Judaizers, and further back, vitally concerned his own personal experience. Could he consent to bind upon the young Gentile communities he had been instrumental in founding along the shores of the Mediterranean the very servitude from which he himself had so gloriously escaped?

[1] Assuming the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, where all we hear are receding echoes of the great controversy.

No, and he could not permit others to do so. In jealously defending the spiritual freedom of those who were his sons in the Faith, he deduced and formulated teaching which has often been misunderstood, and sometimes distorted, but which, held in balance and proportion with the rest of Christian theology is salutary, nay almost indispensable. St. Paul was fundamentally Semitic—his method and his argument are intuitive, not logical, at least not logical in the Hellenic sense. He does not stop to clear up intellectual difficulties. Let prosaic Gentile reason follow him as best it may! He leaps to his conclusion with spiritual insight and hurries on. If, however, we keep before our attention the immensity of the Judaistic controversy, and realize all it meant to the Pauline mission, and the future of the Christian Church, we are a long way towards solving the individualistic side of the Apostle's theology.

For it is a theology: it hangs together, one doctrine upon another: it is not a series of fragments, though it is presented to us in the casual, miscellaneous manner adapted to epistolary literature. For it must be remembered that the Pauline letters are genuine letters, not treatises, or apologies employing the epistolary style, like, for example, the Epistle to the Hebrews, or the so-called second Epistle of Clement, and many others. They were called forth to meet pressing needs and to solve vital difficulties, difficulties of faith and life which were confronting his converts in the midst of false brethren, unbelieving Jews, and the vast mass of unconverted Gentiles. His teaching is therefore presented in an unsystematic way as occasion requires, but in its collective aspect it comprises 'a body of reasoned and elaborated doctrines'.[1]

As we have used the Judaistic controversy to explain much of what is distinctive in Pauline theology, so we may

[1] Sanday, art. 'Paul', in *Dict. of Christ and the Gospels*, vol. ii, p. 886.

employ it to explain the singular absence of the Pauline point of view in the thought of the Christian communities which owed their existence to his missionary zeal and statesmanlike oversight. They joined a reverent admiration for his person, and gratitude for his labours, with a forgetfulness of his characteristic arguments and expression of doctrine. Piety and ecclesiasticism, without deep theological reflection, seem the mark of the sub-Apostolic Age.[1] When Christians do rise to higher intellectual levels, they are partly Hellenistic and partly Johannine.[2] In fact the Johannine theology harmonizes wonderfully well with the Greek and Graecized habit of thought. Of course the Arian controversy taxed the resources of the Holy Scriptures and the Pauline Epistles with the rest, but it is only when we reach Augustine that we find a mentality which is akin to that of St. Paul, and even so the kinship is balanced by much which is dissimilar. Indeed the Pauline type is uncommonly rare. And with all respect and reverence we may perhaps say 'it is just as well!' For St. Paul was made of that heroic stuff adapted to storms and crises, not to periods of quiet evolutionary development, or to periods when there may be strife and dissension, but where there is sufficient diffused strength to bear the strain. It was the Divine Providence which placed him where he is to be found—in the later phase of the Apostolic Age.

The Judaistic controversy ceased to be, and with the peril removed, the apparatus employed to repel it was temporarily neglected. But the Pauline theology was too

[1] Clem. Rom. v, Παῦλος . . . *ὑπομονῆς γενόμενος μέγιστος ὑπογραμμός*; also Polycarp, Ep. III, declares his inability to follow *τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ ἐνδόξου* Παύλου.

[2] Except Marcion who, heretic though he was, 'is certainly to be commended as the earliest Christian non-canonical writer to appreciate the greatness of St. Paul' (Foakes-Jackson, *Some Christian Difficulties*, p. 121).

much rooted and grounded in the truth to vanish altogether. It merely waited the need, and the mind, or minds, to use it. It can never be treated without loss as a sort of great man's eccentricity. But with the subsidence of Judaism in the Church, and with the growth of danger of a totally different kind, the Gentile communities as a whole lost the key to a proper understanding of the problems of the Apostolic period, and failed to appreciate the doctrinal position of him who had made Christianity possible for them.[1] Perhaps the Hebraic cast of thought, the frequent Rabbinic interpretations and allusions, the broken, torrential style, so alien to men, of whom many must have received whatever secular education they had from the grammarians and rhetoricians of the Empire, wherein form of the most arbitrary, precise, and artificial kind took precedence of substance, contributed to this lack of appreciation. However that may be, the 'simpliciores' of the Gentile Churches were fain to echo the confession of the author of 2 Peter, when he speaks of 'brother Paul' having written in his epistles 'some things hard to be understood'.[2] The more cultured, perhaps repelled at the outset by their inherent Hebraism, found that the Apostle's letters were pre-occupied in a controversy of which they knew nothing, or to which at least they were indifferent. Consequently the characteristic doctrines of St. Paul were for the most part reverently laid aside in a napkin. When taken up by some kindred spirit—which has happened several times in Christian history—they have too often been wrested from their original meaning and employed to enforce implications which St. Paul would probably have rejected. Much of the history of the Church would have been different, and we cannot help thinking much bettered, and the course of many individual lives would have been

[1] In reference to misunderstanding of St. Paul, see Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 68. [2] 2 Pet. iii. 16.

completely changed, if earnest men had carefully studied not only the actual text but the conditions under which the Apostle wrote. Nevertheless, 'The Pauline reactions describe the critical epochs of theology and the Church.' Harnack expands this idea, which may be accepted, I think, with slight reservations: 'One might write a history of dogma as a history of the Pauline reactions in the Church, and in doing so would touch on all the turning-points of the history. Marcion after the Apostolic Fathers; Irenaeus, Clement, and Origen after the Apologists; Augustine after the Fathers of the Greek Church; the great Reformers of the Middle Ages from Agobard to Wessel in the bosom of the Mediaeval Church; Luther after the Scholastics; Jansenism after the Council of Trent—everywhere it has been Paul, in these men, who produced the Reformation.' [1]

No doubt the Pauline doctrines which have created the most stir in Western Christendom are those of Predestination and Election.[2] And here we may say again that both are intimately associated with the Judaistic controversy. St. Paul's most striking declarations on these subjects are in the Epistle to the Romans, and there he is giving as it were the death-blow to his opponents, not with the fierce invective of the Galatian letter, but with the calmness of one who has already won the victory. 'Come and let us reason together' represents his spirit in this later writing, and there is withal a certain tenderness and wistfulness, an appreciation of the attitude of the enemy as identical with what his own had been, and a love of his own people which estrangement and persecution has not been able to stifle. 'Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them (the Jewish race), that

[1] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. i, p. 136 (Eng. trans.).

[2] Esp. Rom. viii. 28–30 for Predestination; Rom. viii. 31–xi for Election.

they may be saved',[1] or a little earlier, 'I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, . . . that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ concerning the flesh.'[2] There speaks the Jew. Though Christ has made him what he is, the aggressive defender of everything which the Jew instinctively dreads, though the service of Christ has made him hated and despised of his countrymen, yet he loves and yearns over his own people and his father's house. The Hebrew race had been chosen of God, and therefore was the recipient of many blessings, many privileges, but it was also a steward and trustee for God.

The time has, however, come when 'God's elect are no longer the Jews in particular. On the contrary, the Jews in bulk have lost their position and become apostates in rejecting the Christ. This result, in the first place, cuts St. Paul to the heart, for his religious patriotism was peculiarly intense. But in the second place it furnishes an objection in the mouth of the Jew against St. Paul's whole message. For if God had really rejected His chosen people, He had broken His word in so doing. . . . To this objection, then, St. Paul sets himself to reply.'[3] He is jealous for the character of God. He vindicates His justice. 'Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.'[4] That is the spirit of his defence here as in the earlier stages of his argument. 'And if the question be asked: Why has Israel been rejected? The answer is: That so far as the actual Israel has fallen out of the elect body, it is because

[1] Rom. x. 1.
[2] Ib., ix. 1–5.
[3] Gore, *Ep. to Romans*, vol. ii, pp. 3–4.
[4] Rom. iii. 4.

they refused to exhibit the correspondence of faith; but also Israel, as such, has not been rejected; for, as of old, so now there is a faithful remnant. Nor is the partial alienation of Israel which has occurred final. God is simply waiting for their recovery of faith to restore them to their ancient and inalienable position of election. Meanwhile he uses their temporary alienation as the opportunity of the Gentiles ' who must maintain ' the correspondence of faith with the purposes of God. . . . Thus through all stages of election and rejection—by both methods of mercy and of judgement—God . . . works steadily for the opportunity of showing His Mercy upon all men.' [1] This doctrine of election, characteristically Pauline as it is, is not the harsh, repellent thing which it sometimes seems to be in the ears of the modern Christian. It is really a vindication of God's justice, and of His freedom of choice, against those who would limit the Divine operations to the seed of Abraham. His argument is broad and general. He is thinking of Jew and Gentile, not of individuals, and not of personal salvation or security. Of course the personal implications are there. In regard to individuals, God is free to choose and reject for His purposes, and a failure to correspond to responsibility and privilege on the part of the single person involves the risk of rejection as it did, save for the remnant, in the case of Israel. There is no Stoic fatalism here, but a noble justification of the ways of God to men, expressed in the manner of a Jewish Rabbi, not in that of a Greek philosopher. The manner accounts for much which sounds austere and arbitrary to the Occidental. And the apparent austerity, the arbitrariness of individual statements, vanish when we consider that they are drawn from Old Testament narrative, or are quotations from Old Testament prophets. When we also

[1] Gore, *Ep. to Romans*, vol. ii, pp. 4–5; also Lechler, *Apostolic Times*, vol. ii, sect. v, 'Church of God', pp. 73–86.

reflect that these references and citations are steps in a long argument which must be considered as a whole, if we are to understand its drift and appreciate its teaching, we are the less disturbed by such harsh statements as 'Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated',[1] and 'Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another vessel unto dishonour?'[2] and the immediate application. It is the form and language which sound discordantly in our ears, but the subject-matter of the whole argument, and the conclusion which the Apostle reaches are in harmony with all the love and hope of the Christian religion. 'For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient that by the mercy shewn to you they also may now obtain mercy. For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all.'[3]

This election, first, of the Jewish nation, and when as a whole it had refused to correspond to its vocation, then secondly of the Christian Church, presupposes the Divine Purpose and Determination. No one but a Jew trained as a Pharisee would have expressed the truth in the fashion of St. Paul, and none but Western minds like those of St. Augustine and Calvin would have pushed the Pauline formulations to an extreme. To use an anachronism, which can shelter itself under a name of such literary distinction as that of Matthew Arnold, there is no Calvinism in St. Paul. He simply states, as occasion requires, either side of the great dilemma of Divine Determination and human Free Will, but he does not attempt to reconcile them. He leaves that to men of more precise mentality, but lesser genius and smaller inspiration.

I feel that it cannot be sufficiently impressed upon

[1] Rom. ix. 13; cf. Deut. xxi. 15. [2] Ib., ix. 21.
[3] Ib., xi. 30–2.

students that the Apostle in these famous chapters is not dealing directly with the ultimate fate of individuals, but is expounding the Divine Purpose for men in a certain corporate capacity. In the section in which the statements regarding predestination occur the hope of the Cosmos [1] is the main theme, and the unfolding of the Divine Purpose in a series forms an introduction to the grounds upon which Christian assurance is based.[2] Men (and women) called singly out of heathenism become members of the One Body of Christ. Collectively, and of course individually, as long as they correspond to the favour shown to them, nothing can 'separate' them 'from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord'.[3] This magnificent passage forms an overture to the consideration of the Jewish race which had for the most part forfeited its position of privilege and responsibility as the elect of God.[4] Even in this case, he looks forward with inextinguishable hope 'until the fulness of the Gentiles come in; and so all Israel shall be saved'.[5]

It is unquestionable that St. Paul enriched and expanded whatever doctrines he discussed with the power of his own personality, his mental endowments, and his spiritual genius. He was not destroyed; he was transformed by his spiritual experiences. The original elements remained, although they were renewed, readjusted, and empowered for altered conditions and widened vistas. Consequently an individuality, a distinctiveness, is to be found in all the Pauline utterances. The reaction to the Vital Force is stronger and more profound in his case than in the case of the vast majority of those who have felt Its influence. But his personality is not lost; it is really found, in accordance with the declaration of Jesus Christ.[6]

[1] Rom. viii. 18–30; also Gore, *Ep. to Romans*, vol. i, pp. 298–326.
[2] Ib., 28–30. [3] Ib., 31–9.
[4] Ib., ix–xi. [5] Ib., xi. 25–6.
[6] Matt. x. 39; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24; John xii. 24.

Sometimes this individuality of presentation in regard to Christian doctrine takes a Hellenistic [1] rather than a Hebraic turn. The facts and verities are those of the earliest period, the Palestinian period of the history of the Church, but they are presented (1) in the Pauline manner, (2) in a form suited to local conditions. The Pauline manner is the result of inheritance, of early training, in which Rabbinic and Hellenistic elements combine, and of spiritual experience, the spiritual experience finding expression in the face of difficulty and opposition. The difficulty and opposition raise his convictions to a white heat, and it is this spiritual passion which is so characteristic of St. Paul, and makes of him the finest transmitter of Vital Force whom the world has known.

But the form is suited to local conditions, and the local conditions everywhere are predominantly Gentile and Greek. This is the case even in the Mother City of the Empire, for the Church of Rome was substantially a Greek community well into the Second Century. Consequently, St. Paul brings into play his wonderful versatility and adaptability, acquired by his familiarity with two diverse cultures, that of Palestine and that of the Hellenized Gentile world. Under the impulse of the motive-power of his Christian life he came to regard this faculty of adaptation as a sacred instrument, and its exercise a sacred duty. 'For though I was free from all (men), I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, not being myself under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. . . . I am become all things

[1] I use the term here in its wider sense as applicable to the Graecized world, and not merely to Greek-speaking Jews.

to all men, that I may by all means save some.'[1] He writes these words to a community overwhelmingly Gentile and Greek, and he immediately exhibits this liberality of culture by a description of self-discipline which gains an added force by being couched in the terms of the athletic contests which were so much a part of Corinthian social life.[2]

It is, however, in his presentation of the Faith that the Apostle permits himself the use not merely of the language, but also of the thought prevalent among his converts. As I have said before, St. Paul was the first constructive theologian of the Church. He thought out his religion, and he thought it out with the declared purpose of preaching it the more effectively. The Greek world wanted not only facts and positive statements, but expositions and reasons. If doctrine could be presented with greater force by the employment of terms of current thought, all the better! Indeed current thought might enrich and expand the original conception. There were elements of truth among the Gentiles. Why, therefore, should those elements not be utilized, bringing the glory and honour of Greece and Rome into the Church of God? Especially in the system of the Stoics were there ideas which were 'naturally Christian', as I have already pointed out, ideas with which St. Paul, a native of Tarsus, itself a centre of Stoic teaching, would be most familiar, and these ideas were widely current in the ancient world.[3] Even when the ideas were alien to the Gospel which the Apostle preached, the terminology was ready to hand, and could be employed to establish a relationship between teacher

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 19–22; also Acts xxvi. 19–23; Gal. ii. 8; Eph. iii. 7; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 17; not forgetting that in some quarters the Pastoral Epistles, from which the closing references are taken, are regarded as unauthentic.

[2] 1 Cor. ix. 24–7.

[3] E. V. Arnold, art. 'Stoicism', in *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, vol. xi, p. 864.

and pupil. The word, *συνείδησις*, very popular with the Stoic, and appropriately so, is a favourite with St. Paul.[1] The idea which underlay it of 'the internal, absolute, supreme judge of individual action',[2] was one which the Christian teacher could use and transmute with great effectiveness. The analogy of the human body with the Church of Christ would seem to have been suggested by Stoic thought and imagery. Moreover, when the Stoic boasted himself a citizen of the world, the Apostle took up the language and applied it to the city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Others may boast of their earthly citizenship, but that of Christians is in heaven.[3] In his speech at Athens, which reads like a faithful summary of the Apostle's argument from the pen of an historian whose setting is true to all that we know of contemporary Athenian life, we find a blending of Jewish and Stoic thought with a Christian application. Here and elsewhere quotations of, or references to, Greek poets and philosophers are interwoven into the argument or exhortation. It is questionable whether St. Paul knew much of Plato —not so much, for instance, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews—but there is something Platonic in the method of describing the conflict between flesh and spirit and a direct reminiscence in the cry: 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this body of death!'[4] and again, 'For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life'.[5] For the *sacredness* of the Divine

[1] According to Schleusner's Lexicon it occurs twelve times in Pauline Epistles; also cf. Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon of New Testament Greek*.

[2] Lightfoot, *Philippians; St. Paul and Seneca*, p. 303.

[3] Phil. iii. 20 gives the Stoic suggestion a Platonic turn; also cf. Lightfoot's note (id. loc.) on *πολίτευμα*.

[4] Rom. vii. 24 (R.V.); cf. Platonic *σῶμα δεσμωτήριον, σῶμα σῆμα*.

[5] 2 Cor. v. 4.

within us we may conveniently turn to Stoicism again, though Plato and the disciples of the Porch are one in this as in many other things. Seneca and Epictetus both abound in such maxims as: 'Keep the deity within inviolate and free from scathe'; 'Keep your God within pure and erect, as though at any moment liable to be recalled,' 'By what other name can we call an upright and good and great mind except (a) god lodging in a human body?' 'Temples are not to be built to God of stones piled on high: He must be consecrated in the heart of each man.' Compare the above with the words of St. Paul: 'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'[1] 'Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?'[2] The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is fundamental to the Christian society, fundamental both in its transcendental and immanent aspects, but the Apostle takes this principle, *never before theologically formulated*, and presents it to his Gentile readers, using language they would easily recognize, and calling to his assistance from the current philosophy thoughts which were in harmony with, and illustrative of, the great truth. The leaven is already at work upon the meal, changing it into fine bread.

To explain what St. Paul does when he takes up current ideas and language, let us examine cursorily the Stoic doctrine of freedom. 'What does freedom mean? Freedom to do what is right. This is the meaning of the Stoic paradox that only the wise man is free. . . . You will see that the Stoic conception of moral freedom is like the Christian, with the difference of course that the Logos whereby the Christian becomes free is the Son of Man. . . . "For he that was called in the Lord, being a bond-servant, is Christ's bond-servant."[3] In St. Paul he alone is free

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 16. [2] Ib., vi. 19. [3] Ib., vii. 22.

who is the δοῦλος Χριστοῦ.'[1] Stoic freedom is an idea, not an actuality; it is purely subjective. Pauline freedom, which is Christian freedom, is real; it is both subjective and objective. It is an inner concept which at last has found its correspondence in the Person of Jesus Christ.

So striking and yet so many-sided a figure is that of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, that scarcely three scholars at the present time agree as to what is specially characteristic of him. Schweitzer thinks that it is his eschatology which gives the clue to his teaching; one or two still lay stress, and rightly so, on his spiritual experiences. But these men write and argue as if St. Paul were a thoroughgoing individualist. Personal religion is to him truly essential, but it is never isolated; it is part of the common Christian life in which the more vital and enlightened the individual is, the more will he profit. Loisy holds that St. Paul was chiefly instrumental in changing the original faith into 'a religion of mystery', and this is the most popular, as it is the newest, 'fad' in scholarly circles.

For myself, I am glad that attention has been directed at last to this very important element in Pauline teaching, not because I believe that St. Paul created it. It was inherent in the original Gospel: it belonged to the Synoptic tradition, and only received from St. Paul the expansion and enrichment of content which any great subject will receive when it becomes to an acute mind the material of reflection. The ground for congratulation is that we are shaking ourselves free from the excessively individualistic view of Pauline theology which has coloured and obscured the Apostolic utterances for a large part of Western Christendom. Meanwhile we may possess our souls in patience until the exaggerations and ill-founded inferences of the new school are worn away by the attrition of con-

[1] Adam, *Vitality of Platonism* (*Hymn of Cleanthes*), p. 168.

troversy, and the sacramental teaching of St. Paul is not merely rescued from the neglect of the past, but is established in its true proportion and perspective. Then this teaching will be found to have been an essential element from the very first in the life and faith of the Church, though of course developed according to St. Paul's peculiar genius, and adapted to the environment in which he taught and laboured.

This environment was honeycombed with mystery-cults whose purpose was to raise the soul of their initiates 'above the transiency of perishable matter to an immortal life through actual union with the Divine'.[1] Wherever the Apostle travelled he would find these associations or guilds for the practice of religion. In Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome there would be bands of men seeking salvation and release. Probably many of the Gentiles who were fascinated by St. Paul's teaching, even 'the God-fearers',[2] had originally belonged to one or other of these mystic brotherhoods.

And it was no doubt an element common to the Gospel and their former mysteries which, in the first place, draw them to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, St. Paul seeks to lead them into 'the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge'.[3] The Apostle promised in reality what was presented to them through the Pagan cults merely 'in a figure', and by rite and symbol.

All these sacred guilds had elaborate initiations. The Eleusinian Mysteries had a bath of cleansing in the sea. An ornate purificatory rite commanded the entrance to Orphism. Washing precedes participation in the Mysteries of Isis.[4] It was natural, therefore, that a parallel should

[1] Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions*, p. 79.
[2] Gentile adherents of Judaism.
[3] Col. ii. 2.
[4] Apuleius, *Metam.* xi. 20.

be drawn between these initiatory rites and Christian Baptism. It was not that the latter depended on the former. If anything is certain, it is that baptisms and lustrations were common features of contemporary Jewish religious life, and that Christian Baptism was an essential element in Christianity before it overspread the confines of Palestine—a rite in full operation from the very first. But coming into centres of population where purificatory rites were general, the Apostle seizes the opportunity to enforce Christian teaching in language which Romans and Corinthians, for instance, could understand. But this new initiation is no empty form, hanging helplessly upon the subjective mood of the candidate; it is baptism 'into the name' of Christ Jesus,[1] into a living spiritual Body from the deadness of the heathen world.

In the sacrificial meals of the Mystery-religions, there was certainly the idea of communion with the deity through the ritual participation of food with the god and with the brethren. Whether it went so far in the Hellenistic period as to identify the god with the victim devoured, is still uncertain, though this was a phenomenon common enough in the ritual of other cults at other times. But St. Paul did not have to ransack antiquity in order to create a doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament. It had been done for him by the Master Himself at the Paschal Meal with His disciples on the night before the Crucifixion. The Words of Institution which have been incorporated into the Liturgies of the Church need no quotation for Christian readers. And yet they were uttered at the great Jewish Feast, in the Holy City, to a party composed exclusively of Palestinian Jews. Of a truth, St. Paul could add but

[1] Kennedy remarks that there is no trace of baptism or initiation *into the name* of the deity among the Mystery-cults (pp. 229–30). Contrast Rom. vi. 3–4; Gal. iii. 27; 1 Cor. x. 2; xii. 13; Eph. iv. 5; Col. ii. 12.

little to them. What he says is important, however, since he emphasizes two things. First, the continuity in this respect of the Gentile communities with the Palestinian tradition; secondly, he witnesses to practices among religious-minded heathen analogous in outline to the Eucharistic worship of the Church. For our purpose I feel this to be startlingly significant. Not only in thought, with the few, but in religion, with the masses, there was a process of development, a *praeparatio evangelica* going on, which appropriately met the Vital Force, and accounts for the wonderful success of a movement which, *prima facie*, had everything against it. And St. Paul is the one responsible for the application of the Vital Force, and in applying it he does not neglect the analogies and the dangers which are so much a part of the life of his converts. In these Eucharistic passages,[1] however, he is more intent upon warning than upon illustration. 'When therefore, the Apostle points to the inconsistency of eating food offered to idols and partaking of the Eucharist, I am inclined to believe that it is the antagonism of the two sodalities, the two brotherhoods, that which has its centre in a heathen temple and that which is cemented at the Table of the Lord. . . . All public sacrifices . . . all popular worship, have this corporate and common character.'[2]

One might go on indefinitely studying the personality, the labours, the teaching of this wonderful, impressive, and pregnant figure in the history of religion and the world, but the limits of our self-imposed subject will not permit. He who is at once Jewish Rabbi and cosmopolitan Stoic, with a tincture of Platonism; Predestinarian and Arminian;[3] a Hebrew of Hebrews, and yet the most loyal, loving friend of Gentiles; a deep theologian and

[1] 1 Cor. x. 1–5; x. 14–22; xi. 17–34.
[2] Simpson, *The Sacraments of the Gospels*, pp. 52–3.
[3] Anachronism again crops up!

yet practical exhorter; the mystic and yet the man of affairs—except the power of Christ had touched him he would have been, as he would have himself confessed, I fancy, a Jewish Rabbi and nothing more. Possibly no better way of closing this sub-section could be found than with the words of a distinguished scholar possessed of the gift of choice literary expression: 'With regard to the development of theology, no doubt it was very great, and yet how much of the materials for it were already prepared to St. Paul's hands. If you take as an analogy the even fuller dogmatic statement of the Prologue of St. John's Gospel, you will find nearly all the germs of it in the Old Testament itself; when you add to the Old Testament the development of the thought of the wisdom of God in the Apocryphal books, of the Memra in the Jewish Rabbinic Theology, or of the Logos in Alexandria, of the expectation of the great Messiah in the Jewish Apocalypses, you will see that it only needed the coming of some real person great enough to correspond to these expectations to cause a rich and varied theology to spring up quickly around His nature and His work. . . . History must not ignore the spiritual hero. . . . St. Paul was a greater personality than Luther or . . . Abraham Lincoln . . . he was so great because he threw open his whole nature to the influence of the Spirit of Jesus; because he beheld with open face the glory of the Lord, until he was changed into the same image himself; because he let pour into himself and radiate through his very weakness the strength of that one human personality which alone could ever adequately reflect and reveal the personality of God.' [1]

From many points of view this estimate of the significance of St. Paul's person and teaching is sketchy and unsatisfying, from the point of view of this work it is almost too protracted. Yet it is difficult to see how it

[1] Lock, *The Bible and Christian Life*, pp. 134–40.

could be curtailed without seriously impairing the value of our study, for it was through St. Paul that the Graeco-Roman world came into contact with the Vital Force. Although himself a Jew, he nevertheless had affinities to and sympathies with the Greek-speaking Gentile. Transformed himself, he was the one most fitted to administer to others the sacred infusion and reproduce in others a like transformation, like however, in the way of analogy, not in the way of identity; for the action of the leaven is conditioned by the psychology and circumstances of the person (or race) submitting to it.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

In the consideration of the leaders of great religious movements, their theological ideas, and their method of presentation, form a very important part of investigation, but when we attempt to explore the effects of religion among masses of adherents, the predominant interest is simple faith and conduct. We may suppose with fair reason that theologically they follow their leaders so far as they understand them. It is very difficult to gauge the mental and spiritual apprehension of a large number of average intelligences, especially when they live in a remote age and have supplied us with no literary records; it is less difficult to collect evidence as to the influence of their faith upon their conduct. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' [1]

The exhortations to purity of life with which the New Testament Epistles abound, witness not only to the subtle and all-pervading dangers which surround the disciples,

[1] Matt. vii. 16.

but also to a sensitiveness of conscience among those to whom they were addressed. The prophets of the Old Dispensation often appeal, and denounce, with scant hope of being heeded; the New Testament writers issue their warnings and advice in a spirit of confidence that their appeals will not be in vain. Moral laxity was a characteristic of Pagan life; some religious rites made easy, where they did not actually encourage, prostitution;[1] nameless vices were widely prevalent even in the days of Athens' glory;[2] how much more so in the days of disintegration, and in the vast commingling of nations and culture in the Graeco-Roman Empire? Even so late a Stoic teacher as Epictetus, one whose moral level is generally high, has nothing better to say to a young disciple than: 'As to pleasure with women, abstain as far as you can, before marriage; but if you do indulge in it, do it in the way conformable with custom. Do not, however, be disagreeable to those who take such pleasures, nor be apt to rebuke them, or to say often that you do not.'[3] It is easy to see that he despairs of any higher advice. How different are the injunctions of New Testament writers. Let us note a few of them. 'Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness . . .; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to (fulfil) the lusts (thereof).'[4] 'It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even mentioned among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife. . . . Purge out the old leaven. . . . I wrote unto you to have no company with fornicators' (but as the social system is filled

[1] e.g. the worship of Aphrodite at Corinth was particularly licentious, though in some places her rites were harmless enough.

[2] Even Socrates speaks tolerantly of licentiousness and unnatural vice.

[3] Quoted Glover, *Conflict of Religions*, p. 52.

[4] Rom. xiii. 9, 13–14.

with them), 'now I write unto you not to keep company if any man that is named as a brother be a fornicator. . . . Do not ye judge them that are within? . . . *Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.*' [1] 'Flee fornication . . . he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body . . . your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost . . . glorify God in your body.' [2]

Except the first, the above quotations are all drawn from 1 Corinthians, and I have emphasized them just here because (1) the Corinthian Church felt the pressure of sensuality more perhaps than any other, because (2) we have evidence, rather ambiguous it is true, as to the effect of the Apostolic injunctions. The general leniency in regard to sexual intercourse has been noted, but the conditions of Corinth as a great double seaport [3] and trading city, possessing wealth, a heterogeneous population, and wide opportunities for indulgence, were in this respect, and to Christian eyes, appalling. The Christian community was exposed to many and great moral perils, and yet the one sin of this type mentioned categorically was one to which the Gentiles were not prone.[4] The danger, to the Apostle's mind, seems to be, not that the Christian disciples should follow *this* gross example of immorality, but that, viewing it leniently from their unhappy familiarity with other forms of vice prevailing around them, the general moral tone should be lowered, and the vices from which the Gospel of Christ had rescued them should again assert their sway. Consequently, he commands them to judge, and to discipline this wicked person, delivering him to Satan for a season that he may find room for

[1] 1 Cor. v. 1–13. [2] Ib., vi. 13–20; also viii. 8.

[3] Laudabunt alii . . .
Aut Epheson, *bimarisve Corinthi*
Moenia. . . . (Hor., *Odes* I, vii.)

[4] A particular form of incest.

repentance. He confidently expects his directions to be carried out, relying on the conscience of his converts, rendered sensitive by the new life and the new orientation to which they had submitted, and to which the sins of the flesh were abhorrent.

The integrity [1] of the second letter to the Corinthians has been called in question. The writer is no specialist in such matters, but if there is ground for believing that x–xiii is a fragment of an intermediate epistle, it is rather helpful to an elucidation of the matter now in hand. In the midst of much that is of a purely personal nature poured forth under strong emotional stress, the Apostle says : ' I fear, lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and (that) I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.' [2] There is no mention of any particular person as provoking a scandal, but the expression of a general fear that, in the case of many, there has been no repentance of former moral lapses. It seems a natural, reiterated warning from one who is still awaiting news of the result of his censure, a warning which might be more specific if the (assumed) dovetailing of this letter with i–ix had not caused some portions of it to drop out. Then i–ix closes the correspondence on a note of joy and thankfulness. After all, the Corinthians have accepted his strictures, have not ' reverted to type ', have by his words been recalled not only to a better mind, but to the purity of life which loyalty to Christ Jesus demands. Still, there is no clear reference to the incestuous person. Possibly the case mentioned [3] is that of one who had done the Apostle some personal injury. If it be the former, we have clear proof of the right-mindedness of these Gentile Christians, set as

[1] Not its authenticity—at least not by any one who counts.
[2] 2 Cor. xii. 21. [3] Ib., ii. 5–10 ; vii. 12.

they are in the midst of so much subtle, general laxity, who yet recognize the standard of Christ, and on being recalled to it strive to regain it. If, on the other hand, it be *not* the case mentioned in the first epistle, we must assume one of two things—either St. Paul relinquished his efforts to remove a flagrant scandal, which is not like him; or else the matter was settled during the interim, and the Apostle felt that reference to it was unnecessary, except in general terms.[1] I prefer the latter alternative.[2] In i–ix St. Paul is clearly most gratified at his converts' efforts to correspond to his injunctions. For the proof of a new power and a new life in an individual, or in a society, is not an immediate and complete sanctification, and an immunity from old temptations—that is a psychological abnormality—but a capacity to respond to the new ideals, and to contend, with some chance of success, against calls to former vices and lower levels of life. As the Apostle points out continually, this capacity is not inherent in themselves (nor in himself), but is the Power of Christ, accessible even to the lapsed who have 'godly sorrow' and humbleness of heart.

I think it may, therefore, be safely assumed that the Gentile Christians of Corinth by contact with the Vital Force were successfully struggling against the temptations to which they were peculiarly prone. The Apostolic correspondence tends to establish this, more perhaps by implication than by direct statement, yet the considerations I have adduced point strongly in the direction of penitence, forgiveness, and reconciliation. This line of thought is further strengthened when the Corinthian community next appears upon the scene. In the Epistle of the Roman Church to the Corinthians, to which the name

[1] 2 Cor. vii. 8–10, 15–16.

[2] Perhaps the matter was referred to in some letter which has been lost.

of Clement is attached, there is scarcely mention made of 'sins of the flesh'. This is remarkable in a writing of such evangelical fervour. Were these vices conspicuous in Clement's age he would certainly have strongly condemned them. They seem, however, to have vanished [1] as completely as the Judaistic controversy. Faction and discord still exist, but they have taken new forms, and the memory of 'blessed Paul' seems to be held in reverence even by the rebels against ecclesiastical authority.

If the Christian community at Corinth could rise above the level of its environment in respect to a form of immorality to which it was terribly exposed, so that it provoked no criticism in this regard, within about forty years (roughly) of its foundation, the inference is strongly in favour of the possession of some grace or power, which gradually obtained control of human passion and enabled it to resist evil suggestion. If this happened at Corinth it could happen at Rome, at Ephesus, or at Philippi, where the situation in this regard was certainly no worse, and probably was better, than in Corinth. And we have reason to believe that the standard of sexual purity throughout the Christian communities was markedly higher than that among their unconverted neighbours. The charges of *flagitia* made against the Christians and investigated by the officials of the Empire [2] are shown to be due to unfounded and deliberately malicious rumour, largely based on a misapprehension of the character and method of Eucharistic worship. That these charges should have been made at all implies that the Christian standard of conduct was publicly more lofty than that of its environment. Suspicious persons readily assumed that a purity so stoutly

[1] I do not mean that human passion was eradicated, but it was under such control as to be no longer a serious menace to the religious life of the community.

[2] See below in regard to Pliny's action; also incidental testimony of Lucian.

maintained in the eyes of the world broke down in the intimate association of mystic rites. It was no lofty code of morality which stirred up these rumours among people who tolerated the licentiousness associated with various forms of polytheistic worship. It was the human, but unworthy, propensity of seeking to reduce pre-eminent virtue to the common, easy level. This inclination, moreover, was fed and nourished by the unpopularity of a sect which refused in so many directions to take its part in the social life of the people, which caused injury to many important trades, which valued far more highly its own fellowship than its citizenship in, and its subjection to, the world-wide Empire, which disregarded the homage due to gods, general and local, even refusing to do honour to the divine Emperor. For these reasons it soon lost the favour, or even the indifference, of the heathen population who at first were inclined to sympathize with a sect which was persecuted by the hateful Jew. But, after all, the Jew was right! It was a nasty, unsociable sect, which induced quarrels, divided families, upset business, and made itself generally unpleasant, and was obstinate about principles which nobody could understand. These Christians are just the kind of people who within their own circle would be generally indecent, be guilty of child-murder, and indulge in cannibalism.[1]

It was popular resentment, voicing itself in malicious gossip, which attracted the attention of the authorities to this vigorous society which was spreading rapidly throughout the Empire. It had now cut itself loose from its Jewish origin,[2] and was adapting itself to the task of subjugating the Gentile world. Roman administration

[1] Child-murder was based on a misconception of the terminology of the Baptismal rite; the charge of cannibalism on a misunderstanding of the language connected with the Eucharist.

[2] I mean in a racial and social sense.

was generally just and impartial, but it could not wink at a movement which was causing general disorder and affecting unfavourably social and economic life. The most conspicuous examples of administrative interference in the earlier period occurred under Pliny's rule (A. D. 112) in Pontus and Bithynia; and in Southern Gaul at Lugdunum (A. D. 177).[1] The procedure in both instances was similar, and secured similar results. Let us take Pliny's method as typical. '(He) apparently fully believed at first that the charges currently brought against the Christians were well founded, and that the general proscription, in accordance with which he condemned them instantly after confession, *was founded on their detestable rites*. He proceeded to inquire into the cases individually; and he learned . . . that *the rites of the Christian religion were simple and harmless*, that their *disciples forbade all crimes*, that the worshippers bound themselves by a sacramentum *to do no wrong*, and that the *charges* commonly brought against them of . . . *hideous offences* at their private meetings *were groundless*.'[2]

The general subject of Imperial suppression of Christianity does not concern us here. The whole matter is discussed in a vivid and convincing manner in *The Church in the Roman Empire* (Ramsay). But it is important for us to notice that under careful and thorough investigation of *flagitia* by stern officials the case against the Christians breaks down. The movement, if inimical to the Pagan Empire, was clearly not immoral—in fact its religious rites directly encouraged a lofty morality. The declarations of Tacitus and Suetonius, referring to an earlier period, that of the Neronic persecution, are clearly based

[1] Under Marcus Aurelius.

[2] Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 205. See, however, the whole subject discussed in chapters IX–XV. The italics in the above quotation are mine.

on spiteful rumour similar to that which contributed to the institution of proceedings against the Christians of Pontus and Bithynia in the reign of Trajan. They are rhetorical and not judicial statements; they merely echo the popular cry; the popular cry, perhaps, of the historian's own period. Where they suggest the natural antipathy of Christianity against the Pagan social system and the Pagan Imperial Government, they are, however, quite correct. This antipathy was fully recognized by the Roman Emperors, who took their responsibilities seriously.

In the preceding pages I have been dealing with one sub-section of ethics, not because I wish to confirm the popular error that sex-problems comprise the whole of it, but because it is upon this department that casual observation focuses. Moreover, the sex-emotion is the most universal, and the strongest, of all emotions, and may reasonably be taken as representative. If there is a power which controls man in his sexual relations, it is a power which can affect him in relations which are less fundamental. And in the period we are considering there was such a force moving quietly but energetically in the midst of the Gentile population.

It would be wrong, however, for us to suppose that Christianity started on its great conquests with an elaborate code of ethics in its hands. It was a life, not a code. Naturally a code built itself up in connexion with the life. It always does. It is one of the safeguards as well as one of the dangers of a highly-developed religion. But in the New Testament, and indeed for a considerable time afterwards, the free and natural relation between the Lord Jesus Christ and the members of His Body remained uppermost. Contact with Pagan morality—and immorality—necessitated the formulation of Christian ethics; just as contact with Pagan philosophy demanded the formulation of Christian theology. But Christ's 'teaching

is not limited to His spoken words; it is an ever-present continuous work. Hence we can speak of a real progress in Christian thought concerning conduct. . . . As Christianity spread to Graeco-Roman soil, Christians, because of their cosmic view of Jesus' Person, appropriated from their new surroundings whatever helped their spiritual life. The history of Christian morality is thus a record of how that Spirit of Christ has been endeavouring to redeem all life to its own service, and the record is still unfinished.' [1]

Pagan writers of the second century do not devote much thought to the study of Christianity. The attack of Celsus is based on shrewd external observation, but his objections are either historical or philosophical. They do not bear on morals. Yet he notes the social tendencies of the faith: (1) that they minimize class distinctions, and stress virtue rather than ability, (2) that they upset the social order and make bad citizens (or subjects) of the Empire. If the general morality of the growing sect had not been above reproach, it is difficult to see how so keen an adversary could have omitted making capital out of moral lapses. It is true that we know the Platonic philosopher [2] only from the pages of Origen, but if Celsus had made such charges, we can imagine how triumphantly the Alexandrian Father would have met them.

Fortunately much of the brilliant satire which flowed from Lucian of Samosata has survived to delight and amuse educated men of the present day. Lucian is typical of the blend of Greek and Oriental culture. In fact he is a representative Hellenist, using the word in its widest sense. Even his language, which is often regarded as a successful

[1] Mackenzie, art. *Ethics and Morality* (Christian), *Encyc. Rel. and Ethics*, vol. v, p. 468.

[2] Celsus was a common name, but the many fragments quoted by Origen suggest Platonism rather than anything else.

attempt to revive Attic diction in the Hellenistic Age, is merely the Κοινή purified by education, and influenced by classic models. It is an error to suppose that the Macedonian conquests had as far-reaching effect upon the tongue of Greece as it had upon its racial life. If the period (*c.* 300 B. C.—A. D. 500) is comparatively barren of masterpieces, the fault is not in the language but in creative literary energy. In Lucian we have a literary genius. It is significant, however, that he is a Syrian by birth, a Hellene by acquired culture, and his chief inspiration is drawn from contemporary life—the life of the Roman Empire in the second century.

In this life Christianity was playing a potent but not a striking part. 'The whole history of religious opinion in the second century was one of flux and change. Christianity was but one of many faiths claiming the allegiance of mankind. New religions were springing up, and the older ones were assuming a new dress. Judaism, the worship of Serapis, the cults of Egypt, the beliefs of the ancient Orient, Mithraism, and the Mysteries were rivals striving to gain empire over the human mind.'[1] The leaven was acting strongly, but after its manner, internally; energetically but secretly, not obtrusively. Its influence is to be noted in what was no longer an eclecticism of speculation, or of ethics, but of faith. Elagabalus gave Jesus an honoured place in his Pantheon;[2] Stoicism was more and more coloured by emotion and religious feeling; the Gnostic sects, which by Pagans were often confused with the Catholic Church, possessed in varying degrees strong infusions of Christianity; and Mithraism,[3] the most

[1] Foakes-Jackson, *Christian Difficulties*, p. 16.

[2] Second-century eclecticism culminated early in the third with the Emperor's ambitious scheme of a universal religion (Milman, *History of Christianity*, Book II, 179). Alexander Severus actually put the plan into practice. Ibid., 181.

[3] But see Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 148.

serious of her rivals, borrowed from the Christian religion some elements of mystic beauty and attractiveness.

But, like Celsus, Lucian did not know Christianity from the inside. He knew it merely as one of many interesting phenomena in contemporary life. To have the witness of an impartial spectator is sometimes of the utmost value from an evidential point of view, even though the spectator's attitude is one of kindly ridicule. Lucian's allusions confirm the picture of Christianity in the New Testament, and establish the claims of Justin Martyr and other Apologists. 'The genuine and self-denying communism of the early Christians; their loyal devotion to an imprisoned member; their care for widows and orphans; their worship of their Founder; their indifference to worldly interests and martyrdom itself; their settled belief in immortality—are mentioned, with patronizing contempt, it is true, but yet as well-known characteristics of the Christian brotherhood.'[1] The impression one receives from Lucian's pages is that of a simple community of honest men, 'given to hospitality', and from their very unworldliness fit to become the dupes of knavish adventurers like Peregrinus. The only other direct reference to Christians in the writings of Lucian are to be found in the satire, *Alexander Pseudomantis*,[2] where the followers of Jesus are ranked by the false prophet with atheists[3] and Epicureans. This in the mouth of Alexander and from the pen of Lucian, though a ridiculous classification, is rather complimentary, for Lucian had more sympathy with Epicureanism than with any other philosophy. If a man of keen observation and brilliant literary power, pledged to the unmasking of all shams and hypocrisies, had nothing

[1] F. G. Allinson, *Lucian—Selected Writings*, p. 205. See also *Περὶ τῆς Περιγρίνου τελευτῆς*. Cf. warnings of Didache as to impostors.

[2] §§ 25 and 38.

[3] The cry of the heathen mob was '*αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους*'.

more to write than a few friendly gibes against the followers of Christ because they were 'easily taken in', and were not worldly-minded, the gentle condemnation amounts to a remarkably clean bill of moral health. I think one may safely assume that the leaven of Christ was working effectually in communities, similar to, but larger than, those addressed with so much anxiety upon matters of morality by St. Paul.

While the second century was remarkable for the steady growth of the Christian Church, for the assimilation of many elements in its environment, and for the exertion of quiet but effective influence upon the social body at large, it was also remarkable for a stiffening of discipline. This was an inevitable consequence of its growing life. There are always people who are on a lower level than the idea of Freedom from Law so earnestly presented by St. Paul. For them there must be a law of the Gospel, or it means nothing at all. The difficulty was present in the earliest Apostolic Age of people within the Church who did not correspond to the Life of Christ. St. Paul met with it in Corinth and elsewhere. How much more difficult must it have been to maintain this correspondence in the case of large numbers of converts flowing into the Church from various classes and with varying motives, bringing with them, often unconsciously, the habits and morals of their former heathen state! So the free, spontaneous acceptance of Christian teaching as the rule of life hardened into recognition of a code of ethics. The earliest and simplest form of such a code is the Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. It consists of plain and direct exhortations—much after the manner of the hortatory sections of the New Testament Epistles—grouped with fair clearness under two heads which may be called (1) moral, (2) ecclesiastical.[1] The moral section is an

[1] Moral, i–vi; ecclesiastical, vii–xvi.

expansion of the declaration with which the little writing opens :

' Ὁδοὶ δύο εἰσί, μία τῆς ζωῆς καὶ μία τοῦ θανάτου, διαφορὰ δὲ πολλὴ μεταξὺ τῶν δύο ὁδῶν.'

The following words which close the moral section indicate, I think, a change of view-point from New Testament times, and also illustrate the difficulty of the second-century Church in securing complete obedience to Christian standards : '. . . if thou art able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou shalt be perfect ; *but if thou art not able, what thou art able, that do.*' [1] Of course when the Christian Church was compelled to look for law it could find nothing nobler than the moral law of the Old Dispensation—this, interpreted by the Christian spirit and applied according to Christian institutions.[2] Nevertheless, recourse to law in any rigid sense is a serious descent from the sublime teaching of the Master, the idealism of St. Paul, and the principles of Life and Love unfolded in the Johannine Gospel and the first Epistle. It must ever be ' a second best ' forced upon the Christian brotherhood by reason of its struggle with the elements it is striving to absorb. There is action and reaction, but Christian faith, and, I think, the evidence of history, leave no doubt upon which side victory will ultimately rest. The Church will not remain ' acutely secularized ', but the nations will bring their honour and glory into it and become thoroughly permeated by its spirit. But this, like many other ideals, is a far-off divine event, and we must with patience wait for it.

[1] The Didache VI—the italics are mine.

[2] I distinguish between legal enactments and principles of life and growth.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THOUGHT

But contact with Graeco-Roman civilization was responsible for more than the codification of Christian ethics. Already an attempt has been made to illustrate the use St. Paul made of his environment in expressing and interpreting his religious thought. We found affinities and parallels with Plato, with Stoicism, and with the Mystery-religions.[1] So also 'the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Fourth Gospel and the first Epistle of St. John show themselves indebted to philosophy—the philosophy of Plato and his successors—in this, . . . that they regard all this perishable world as only an image or adumbration of the true heavenly realities'.[2] From the Pauline theology the Church does not leap at once to a formal construction of the Christian Faith. There is yet a fruitful and inspiring contribution to be made, that which is associated with the name of St. John. Indeed the formal construction was a natural process due to the situation in which the Church found itself. It was a measure of self-defence and self-expression, which was necessary to its permeation of the world in view of the reaction of secular life and thought upon the Christian communities. And the progress towards a formal theology was parallel with the progress towards a system of Christian ethics. Perhaps it was slower in its advance, but it presents similar stages and gradations of development. Persecution and heresy were the shaping forces. Apologists sprang to the defence of the new religion because of the repressive policy of Pagan emperors and the antagonism of Pagan society. Con-

[1] See also Clemen, *Primitive Christianity*, pp. 345, 350 (Eng. trans.).

[2] Id., ib., p. 74.

troversialists arose to do battle for the Church against the dangerous, subtle, and complex theories of the quasi-Christian Gnostics. They battled for the Faith in Church Councils against Arians and Nestorians. Credal Christianity developed naturally and inevitably. There are those who lament the growth of a formal theology and sigh for the free spiritual atmosphere of the New Testament. But that freedom and spirituality are still to be had if, as we cling to the framework which has been erected through centuries of struggle for the truth, we ascend upwards. So far as the followers of Jesus draw near to Him they partake of the freedom of the Gospel; so far as they fall away from Him, they feel the severity of prohibition and the pressure of dogmatic statement. On the lower levels, where most of us are, the one and the other are indispensable, and we should thank the Holy Spirit of God for having provided us with safeguards and helps to decent living and right thinking.

Meanwhile, it is well for us to fix our gaze upon the heights, and the Fourth Gospel helps to clear our sight. The early Fathers recognized the character of the Johannine writing and called it 'spiritual'[1] by which they seemed to mean that it was not content to record the facts of the Divine Life on earth, but to interpret them. It is quite beyond the purpose of this treatise to enter into questions of authenticity, or to examine the subject-matter of the Johannine writings. For us at present it is sufficient that they form an integral part of the sacred literature of our faith. As part of that literature they supply elements which have not been obvious in earlier presentations of Christian teaching. There is a difference between the simple and direct declarations of fact made by the original Twelve, and the enrichments, expansions, and deductions

[1] Cl. Alex., quoted by Euseb., *H. E.* vi. 14; also Origen, *de Prin.* 4.

made by St. Paul. The difference, however, is not one of essence but of temperament, situation, and experience. These latter factors combine to produce thought upon the original elements, and the Pauline theology was the result. The Epistle to the Hebrews illustrated the effect of the faith working in the mental crucible of a converted Alexandrian Jew. These are alike, and yet strangely unlike, to one another, but they possess among others a common element which may elude the observation of the average reader. The work of the earliest teachers of the Church was to proclaim the Christ; later it became necessary to explain and interpret his significance. This development was inevitable, and the development, as was natural, followed the modes of thought of the day, that is, it employed the ideas which were current among thoughtful men to explain, or at least to make apprehensible, the mysteries of the Gospel. So a modern religious teacher might apply the Theory of Relativity, or Bergson's Intuitionalism, to the problems of contemporary Christianity. As I have already shown, Stoicism was a prime factor in making men familiar with the idea of some great cosmic principle at work in the universe. Philo took hold of this idea, made it more distinct, and linked it up with his Hebraic faith in a Transcendent God. Here was something ready to the hand of the new religious teachers, and accordingly we find St. Paul, especially in his later epistles, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, making large use of this cosmical principle to explain the Person and Mission of the Lord Jesus. The letters to Corinth contain the doctrine not easily disentangled from the rest of its teaching; it is sketched in a few sure but rapid strokes in the Epistle to the Philippians, while it is perhaps the chief ingredient in the letters to Colosse and Ephesus. Already the Logos doctrine was fully employed, though not formally stated, at least thirty years before the appear-

ance of the Fourth Gospel. It was recognized by two teachers of deep spiritual perception and rare intellectual capacity, as superlatively adapted to be the mode for the expression of the truth.

The chief distinction of the Johannine Gospel is not the Logos doctrine, but its application to the earthly Life of Christ. The previous writers make no technical use of the term Logos, unless we find such use in the Epistle to the Hebrews,[1] but 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' employs it with the fullest emphasis and distinctness in the Prologue of his Gospel, because he needs it as the eternal background of the Incarnate Life. Throughout the body of the narrative the Evangelist, with subtle artistry, holds in reserve the timeless utterances of the Prologue. It is as if he said, 'If you seek the key to this Majestic Figure, this Wonderful Personality, this Love and this Power, this Light of the World and Life of men, you will find it in the Prologue. Meanwhile, this is Who He was, and how He spoke, and how He acted, while upon a narrow bit of earth, in the midst of selfishness, prejudice, and ignorance. This is the impression He made upon me, who knew Him best of all, and the impression has grown with advancing years, and I must set it down, before I go to Him, that others may know what I have known.[2] He is the Messiah of the Jews, the fulfilment of Promise, the Christ, the Anointed One; but is He not more than this? Is He not the response to the world's longing; Him towards Whom the world's best thought was groping; the manifestation of Divine Glory in the world; the Way, the Truth, and the Life Who leads to the Father?' There is no doubt that the Evangelist is indebted to the Alexandrian philosophy for the Logos doctrine.[3] (There is reason to believe that

[1] Heb. iv. 12. [2] John xx. 30–21.

[3] Possibly stated over-strongly. For the view that St. John was indebted almost solely to the Memra of the Targums for his Logos

Ephesus was impregnated with it.) But the identification of Jesus with the Eternal Word is his own. And it is this identification which makes the philosophical theory valuable. True (but dry) metaphysics brought into contact with vital truth, and transmuted by it, becomes the nourishment of hungry souls. The beloved disciple, however, was not a philosopher; he was a mystic, and recognizing, perhaps intuitively, perhaps from observance of the partial practice of others,[1] the possibility of the Logos speculations, he converts them to the highest use, the interpretation of the Life of Christ. Religion, and religion of the most vivid and personal kind, because associated with a Person, is the Evangelist's preoccupation. The philosophic material is subordinate; yet it is helpful as an explanatory medium, and, in so using it, the writer indicates that the true rôle of philosophy is to be the handmaid of religion.

The Johannine writings complete what may be called the creative theology of the Church. There is a tendency in modern scholarship to ignore the lines drawn between the canonical writings of the New Testament and other early Christian writings. From some points of view this is a good thing. For instance, it enables us to see the growth and development of the Church as something natural. For another, it places no arbitrary distinction between writing and writing, but allows us to judge them on their merits. Christian literature, whether canonical or uncanonical, is approached in the same cold, impartial fashion. It is a scientific method, and one ought to welcome its application. Nevertheless, where the method is applied, we find that the traditional view of the Church is generally

doctrine, see Westcott, *Gospel of St. John*, introd. xv–xviii, also Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, esp. Epilogue p. 127; for the view above, see Inge, art. *Logos*, in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. viii, pp. 126–7.

[1] E. g. Apollos and St. Paul.

vindicated and added support given to it. The Epistle of Barnabas (so-called), a very respectable writing—and a very early one—has been imputed [1] to the same hand which wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, because of certain superficial resemblances. The latter is a New Testament writing; the former is not. Why this invidious distinction? After the scientific method has expended itself upon the problem it has come to the generally accepted conclusion that the two writings are by separate authors, chiefly on the ground that in spiritual insight and creative thought the Epistle to the Hebrews is immeasurably superior to the Epistle of Barnabas. Just so—spiritual insight and creative thought.[2] It is that which marks the difference between the New Testament writings and their successors.

Not that the non-canonical writings are to be depreciated. They suited their times and their condition. They possess great value for us, both historically and intrinsically. But nothing more could be said. To apply the favourite thought of the late lamented Dr. Hamilton,[3] discovery and revelation had blended together, and there had been evolved an interpretation of the Will of God. Now follow the formative and constructive periods. The last strands connecting Gentile Christianity with its Hebrew original were cut by the end of the first century. The Johannine writings were the final utterances of any moment which were Hebrew in essence and Hellenistic in form. For the future, Gentile Christianity stood on its own feet, and, having inherited the Promise, battled for its treasure in

[1] Notably by Tertullian.

[2] And in the case of the Gospels and Acts a sort of innate authoritativeness. The inclusion within the Canon of some of the secondary Epistles is rather puzzling, e. g. 2 Peter and Jude.

[3] *The People of God* passim, but especially *Discovery and Revelation*. N.B.—Discovery (Greek); Revelation (Hebrew); Interpretation (Hebrew-Greek).

the face of an unbelieving world, not with carnal weapons, but with the sword of the Spirit and with the shield of faith.

Strange to say, though all historical connexion with Judaism ceased, the Hebrew elements in Christianity, as distinct from those which are catholic, persisted, and seemed to thrive, on Gentile soil. In previous pages I have stated my belief that the new religion absorbed most of the Apocalyptic warmth and enthusiasm which marked the times of Jesus of Nazareth. This element always rises to the surface in periods of excitement or distress, sometimes in extravagant forms, as in the Chiliasm of the first centuries, the eschatological expectations of the tenth century, and the Adventism of to-day. But at its worst it is one of the more harmless aberrations from normal Christianity, and considering the emphasis Our Lord and Master Himself laid upon the doctrine of the Last Things, it is evidently intended that His followers should shake off the creeping paralysis of the world by thoughts of the sudden and violent close of this dispensation. After all, nature varies from orderly progress and development to catastrophe ;[1] human history broadens out from precedent to precedent, and then the process is broken by some earth-shaking war. It would be surprising, since it is in the world-order, if religion escaped. On the other hand, it is irrational to endow the intermittent convulsions of Nature with spiritual significance, and to suppose that it is God, angry at the licentiousness of fashionable society, who overthrows multitudes of harmless peasants on the slopes of Vesuvius.

Another Judaistic element, though one which the practical-minded Hebrew shares with the average man of other races, was the legalizing temper. After the disappearance of those who planted and watered the Christian communities in the Gentile world, it was inevitable that

[1] Lukyn Williams, *The Hebrew-Christian Messiah*, pp. 347 f.

legalism should grow up, and a legalism that found its suggestion in the Old Testament, for until the New Testament was collected, the Septuagint Version of the ancient Scriptures commanded universal recognition. There the Gentile Christian found the corroboration of his faith in the hopes of the ancient People of God. He saw reason to believe that he had fallen heir to the promises contained therein. He, rightly enough, saw analogies in the Levitical system, and the ecclesiastical organization of the Christian Church.[1] The Christian tradition was not yet crystallized, but the process was greatly assisted by Old Testament parallels. And we may thank God for it, since there was danger in the second century that Christianity would melt away into Gnosticism, or lose itself in a sort of ' barbaric Platonism '. It was the Spirit of Christ, the Vital Force, which kept the Church true to its original, and directed the guardians of the faith to the protection which was needed, and which was ready to their hands.

But other forces were at work to maintain an equilibrium, and they were of genuine Hellenistic [2] character. Hardly does there seem a trace of Hebraism in Ignatius of Antioch.[3] He is an inspiring example of the Power of Christ upon a Gentile personality, and his letters are full of a warm devotion to the Master for Whom he glories to give up his life. Of course there are occasional quotations and allusions to the Old Testament, especially from Isaiah and the Psalms, but the Pauline and Johannine writings appeal to him most strongly. Essentially, he borrows nothing except from Christ. His letters are the outpourings of a personality of great force and distinction, not a distinction of mind so much as of spirit, and the spirit is wholly Christ's.

[1] E. g. Clem. Rom. xl–xlii.

[2] I am here employing the word in its wide sense as applicable to the Gentile inhabitants of the Eastern part of the Empire.

[3] Judaism is ' a leaven old and sour ' (Magn. x).

It is his union with Christ which has ennobled him. Apart from the magnificent self-sacrifice of Christian martyrs, the second century was a singularly unheroic age. The Bishop of Antioch is on his way to Rome and martyrdom. He writes a letter in advance to the Roman Church begging them not to intervene and prevent his sacrifice: 'Now am I beginning to be a disciple', he says, '. . . Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushings of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the Devil to assail me. Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ.'[1] In all the epistles there is an emotional intensity which reminds one of St. Paul, and the likeness extends to language. 'My bonds exhort you';[2] 'But as for me, my charter is Jesus Christ . . . and faith through Him; wherein I desire to be justified'; 'for what matter is it if a man praiseth me?' 'Let no man be deceived'; 'For I would not have you to be men-pleasers, but to please God, as indeed ye do please Him'; 'My spirit is an off-scouring of the Cross, which is a stumbling-block to them that are unbelievers,[3] but to us salvation and life eternal.' This last is followed by a quotation from 1 Cor. i. 20. His mind is evidently impregnated with the thought of the great Apostle, so that even his vocabulary and turns of speech fall naturally from his pen. The Johannine literature is also strongly represented, but lies rather in modes of thought. Frequently, however, there are not only isolated words but whole clauses which have a Johannine ring.[4] Without effort and quite spontaneously, the language of the Apostolic Age flows from him without any sense of opposition or even contrast. It is all harmonized for him in the Person of Jesus Christ. He accepts *ex animo* the interpretation

[1] Rom. v. [2] Trall. xii. *παρακαλεῖ ὑμᾶς τὰ δεσμά μου.*
[3] Eph. xviii. . . . *ὅ ἐστιν σκάνδαλον τοῖς ἀπιστοῦσιν.*
[4] Cf. Eph. xix.

of the New Testament theologians,[1] and expresses it according to his own situation and environment. The whole is blended together and issues from him as part of his own spiritual experience, which has its source not in one or other of his predecessors, but in Christ alone. As Harnack says: 'his theology and speech is Christocentric . . . and the same tendency of mind . . . passes over from Ignatius to Melito, Irenaeus, Methodius, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa . . . and to Cyril of Alexandria.'[2] These form a very strong chain of Christian teachers. As for Ignatius—in heart and mind, in soul and life he is wholly Christ's. A Syrian Pagan and a Syrian Christian are composed of similar human emotions and mental powers. But what a transformation has been effected in this man! In the midst of an age where easy-going tolerance is the rule, where a god more or less does not matter, he possesses intense conviction as a monotheist whose God is revealed in Jesus Christ. Where all around him in the heathen world are self-complacent and self-centred, he is humble and self-sacrificing. 'For wearing bonds I salute you, if it be the Divine Will that I *should be counted worthy* to reach unto the end.'[3] '*I do not enjoin* you as *Peter and Paul* did. *They were Apostles, I am a convict;* they were free, *but I am a slave to this very hour.* Yet if I shall suffer, then am I a freed-man of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him. Now *am I learning* in my bonds to put away every desire.'[4] He practises humility but also enjoins it: 'If any one is able to abide in charity, . . . let him so abide without boasting. If he boast he is lost.'[5] The eagerness to sacrifice himself for Christ has already been observed, and a well-known theological writer of the nineteenth century has appropriately said: 'Myriads of condemned criminals in all ages have written to plead

[1] St. Paul and St. John. [2] *History of Dogma*, vol. i, p. 218.
[3] Rom. i. [4] Ib., iv. [5] Pol. v.

earnestly for life, but Ignatius writes to entreat the glory and blessedness of a martyr's death.'[1] The venerable Bishop of Antioch stands pre-eminent in the self-sacrificing army described in the ironic phraseology of a cultured and cynical man of the world[2] in this manner: 'The sober discretion of the present age will more readily censure than admire, but can more easily admire than imitate, the fervour of the first Christians, who, according to the lively expression of Sulpicius Severus, desired martyrdom with more eagerness than his own contemporaries solicited a bishopric.'[3]

We pass now to a different atmosphere, an atmosphere which, however, is still purified by the Spirit of Christ. The Epistle to Diognetus is evidently written by a man of education, whose very name has been lost, but who probably flourished about A. D. 150. The person addressed is perhaps the tutor[4] of Marcus Aurelius, who is represented as an inquirer after truth. In the fragment which survives—for only ten chapters have come down to us, the remaining chapters (two) being by a different hand[5]—there is less intensity of passion than in St. Ignatius, rather a calmness and serenity which reminds one of the Fourth Gospel, to whom our author is clearly indebted, judging by the tone and temper of the Epistle, and by the Johannine phraseology recurring from time to time. The beautiful Platonic conception of the *anima mundi* is applied to the Christian fellowship. 'Obviously, whatever the soul is in

[1] Farrar, *Lives of the Fathers*, vol. i, p. 50.

[2] Of the eighteenth century which, in intellectual circles at least, deprecated enthusiasm of every kind.

[3] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. ii, p. 428 ('a new edition', printed 1818).

[4] '. . . κράτιστε Διόγνητε . . .'

[5] Contra, see Cruttwell, *Literary Hist.*, vol. i, p. 303. If by a different hand, probably that of Pantaenus (Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*).

the body, this the Christians are in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, but is not of the body. Christians also dwell in the world, but are not of the world.' [1] The parallel is worked out in carefully balanced statements wherein Greek and New Testament ideas are presented without producing any sense of discord or dislocation. Here we have an illustration of the manner in which the best Hellenic thought was absorbed and fused with the Gospel. Just as there are some persons who possess souls naturally Christian, so there are some thoughts which fit in naturally with the Christian faith and seem only waiting to be caught up by it, and to be employed in its service. In the defence of Christianity the task of protecting the faith and convincing opponents fell into the hands of Christians who possessed some degree of culture.[2] Their reason detected the points of likeness between Pagan thought and Christian verities, and their taste inclined them to select and employ what their reason had detected. And on the whole they did it wonderfully well. There is a remarkable congruity and naturalness both in the ideas incorporated from Paganism and in the method of treatment. We have only to compare the work of the Christian Apologists or the Alexandrian Fathers with that of the great Gnostics, to understand how well the former did their work. For the Christian theologian, or teacher, or controversialist, the basic ideas were those of the traditional faith ; the ideas from Greece were illustrative and interpretative. On the other hand, the Gnostic reversed the process and ' absorbed the vital essence of Christianity into a vast cosmogonical scheme *into which it was made to fit* '.[3] The Gnostic was in reality a Pagan philosopher, or Oriental mystic, with a tincture of, and a

[1] Ep. Diogn., vi.
[2] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 129.
[3] Cruttwell, *Literary Hist.*, vol. i, p. 10. Italics are mine.

stimulus from, Christianity; the Christian thinker was a genuine believer whose faith was clarified by philosophic thought and method. The anonymous author of the Epistle to Diognetus is not, however, a trained philosopher, but rather a man of the world of more than average culture, and hence possessing some familiarity with philosophic thought which he uses to adorn the faith that is clearly dearer to him than life itself. 'Christians', he says, 'increase daily more and more by being punished. God has assigned to them a certain place to fill, and it is not lawful for them to refuse to fill it.'[1] 'They are put to death and yet raised to life. . . They are dishonoured, and yet by their dishonour are covered with glory.'[2] We can see in the above quotations very clearly the afflictions of the Church in the Empire, and the whole tenor of the Epistle exhibits the author as identifying himself with his persecuted brethren, and glorying that he is 'counted worthy' to do so.

CHAPTER XIII

JUSTIN MARTYR

THUS, while the Christian faith was transforming the lives of simple folk, and turning the slave of Antioch[3] into a Bishop of the Church of Christ and a most heroic martyr, it was calling men of high rank and breeding into its fold.[4] They are 'no longer conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of their mind' into faithful servants of Christ. They risk everything for their Master and His Cause, and gain the more—in personality, in power, and

[1] *Ep. ad Diogn.*, vi.

[2] *Ep. ad Diogn.*, v. His indebtedness to 2 Cor. is obvious.

[3] The language of Ignatius suggests that he was of servile origin, though Christ's freedman.

[4] The tone of *Ep. ad Diogn.* implies that the writer was such.

in the exhilarating sense of freedom. Fortunately, of Justin Martyr we know as much as of the unknown correspondent of Diognetus we know little. He was a typical representative of the Hellenistic period. Probably he was the descendant of some Greek settler in Samaria, but it is uncertain whether he was of pure Hellenic stock. At any rate, he was full of the spirit of his age—restless, curious, argumentative, but like the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, when he found the Pearl of Great Price, he instantly distinguished it from the false and the inferior. 'He went and sold all that he had and bought it.'[1]

The second century was famous for its travellers. The world had awakened to the benefits of Imperial administration. The main arteries of trade and social intercourse —the Roman roads—were both convenient and secure.[2] Already St. Paul had made full use of these lines of communication. They assisted materially in the spread of the Faith. But they were used by others, as well as by ambassadors of Christ. When the second century was reached, the Roman roads were crowded with grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers, sages, and cranks. There were false teachers as well as true; honest teachers and wretched quacks. Lucian tells us how he travelled over the Empire, and a large part of his satire is devoted to the unmasking of men like the wandering impostors whom he met on his travels.[3] Alexandria, Antioch, and Ephesus saw many of these wayfaring savants—some of them above reproach, some quite otherwise. One and all, however, were attracted to Rome as by a magnet. Justin himself was what in modern parlance we should call 'a globe-trotter', but with the purest and most unselfish motives. Certainly he was at Ephesus,[4] and at Rome he resided for some years, and apparently on a later visit, received the crown of martyrdom

[1] Matt. xiii. 45–6.
[2] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, pp. 81 ff.
[3] See Didache, xi–xiii.
[4] Euseb., *H. E.* iv. 18.

through the jealous machinations of a rival philosopher, Crescens, the Cynic, and on the sentence of Rusticus, prefect of the city.

Justin Martyr illustrates in his own person the several elements which in this writing I am striving to bring to the surface and enforce. Many of the worthiest of the Early Church are mere shadows to us except for some one striking spiritual fact about them—their conversion or their martyrdom, or a brilliant deed of service for their faith. But we can gather much of Justin Martyr. He was a prolific writer, and he makes many allusions to himself, though these have reference not to the details of his secular life but to his spiritual experiences,[1] for his religion is his supreme interest. What he tells us of his state previous to his conversion is remarkably illuminating, and it is typical of the movement in many of the higher spirits of that age. He was a seeker after truth, an example of the class for which the ancient systems had done all they could, and whom they left still unsatisfied. He did not look for mere intellectual certitude, nor for mere moral control, but for spiritual satisfaction. He wished to know God; his soul was 'athirst for the living God'. And in his search he went from one philosopher to another, from one school of thought to another. A Stoic teacher gave him the threefold instruction of the Stoic School, physics, logic, and ethics, but could tell him nothing about God; a Peripatetic seemed more anxious about his fee than about his system, and Justin thought that rather beneath a philosopher; a Pythagorean insisted on a long course of mathematics as a preliminary to any knowledge of God. Instinctively he realized that this last was not the sort of knowledge for which he was looking.[2] A Platonist in-

[1] Cruttwell, *Literary History*, vol. ii, p. 318.

[2] Nevertheless the affinity of higher mathematics to metaphysics is very close.

terested him immensely. 'The contemplation of ideas seemed to plume his mind with wings, and now at last he imagined that he had attained to wisdom, and that Platonism would fulfil for him its promised end of enabling him to look upon God. He subsequently came to regard such an expectation as a sign of his own stupidity. He had not yet found an answer to his anxious question: "Where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"'[1] Nevertheless he always felt a tenderness for, and natural affinity to, Platonic doctrines which seemed to him, and, I think truly, stepping-stones to Christ.

Already he had become impressed by the indifference of the Christians to death. He tells us this himself.[2] Marcus Aurelius noticed the same phenomenon,[3] but it inspired in him only contempt. Justin, however, was in a receptive mood, and while in this mood occurred the wonderful experience which led to his conversion. The story is too well known to bear transcription here,[4] but it carries all the marks of genuineness. In fact candour, a delightful frankness, is one of the most charming characteristics of this philosophic saint. Occasionally he is inaccurate and mistaken; he is never untruthful. Who his venerable friend of the seashore really was, we shall never know, but he urged the young man to pray earnestly 'that the gates of Light may be opened to thee also'; (he was commending the ancient Scriptures to his attention) 'for these things can only be seen and known by those to whom God and His Christ have given understanding'. The words fell on fruitful soil, and 'a fire was kindled in my soul' (he says), 'and a passion seized me for the prophets and those men

[1] Farrar, *Lives of the Fathers*, vol. i, p. 132.
[2] Just. Mar., *Apol.* i. 8, 11; ii. 12.
[3] Matthew Arnold, *Marcus Aurelius*, *Essays on Criticism*.
[4] Just. Mar. *Dial. with Trypho*, ii.

who are Christ's friends; and so discussing their words with myself, I found this philosophy alone to be safe and helpful, and that is how, and why, I am a philosopher '.[1]

Yet there was no violent upheaval, no painful breakdown of old principles and old prejudices, no apparent necessity for reconstruction of old materials. Justin simply moved forward. At least that is the impression one gathers from a study of the personal references in his writings. He had been searching with much diligence for a true system of philosophy, and he found *the* true one. To him it became the philosophy to which he devoted his life, and of which he became a sedulous and successful exponent. It answered to the highest demands of his reason and satisfied the aspirations of his spirit. The Vital Force applies Itself in different ways and produces different effects in different individuals. It is conditioned by the character and temperament of the recipient. Justin certainly was not a volcanic personality. At first groping in the shadows, then in subdued light, then in the full radiance of the Gospel, he walked upright on his feet, conscious of truth in his heart, and ready therefore to confess with his lips what he believed in his heart. His experience was quite dissimilar to that of St. Paul or St. Augustine, but it was appropriate to his nature and it was typically Greek. Unlike most of his Christian contemporaries he did not despise or hate the old culture. He saw its good points and selected them to help with the interpretation of Christ to his own generation. 'The teachings of Plato', he says, 'are not alien to those of Christ, though not in all respects similar. . . . For all the writers (of antiquity) were able to have a dim vision of realities by means of the indwelling seed of the implanted Word.'[2] If the exponents of deficient and partial systems

[1] Id., ib., viii.

[2] Just. Mar. *Apol.* ii. 13. Quoted by Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 126.

of thought wore their philosopher's gown, *he*, as the interpreter of the true and perfect Philosophy, would wear his also. And thus attired in a garb unique among Christians, he travelled about the Empire from city to city, commending the Gospel as a thing of beauty and of light.

Plato despaired of the masses of mankind. Somewhere he says: 'I do not expect that the majority of mankind will ever believe in the theory of Ideas.'[1] But the philosophy of Christ was for all men. This was Justin's attitude. He says: 'in Christ not philosophers alone and scholars believed, but also working men, the ignorant as well as the learned, and were taught by Him to despise glory[2] and fear and death.'[3] The catholicity of the Gospel appealed to him, and he seems to have imbibed in considerable measure the wide sympathies of his Lord and Master. His temperament is Johannine rather than Pauline, and of course his favourite doctrine of the Spermatic Logos drew him to the writing where he could find his chief justification. Justin's thought of, and care for, the masses was something new in philosophy. Even the most democratic of all the existing systems, Stoicism, did not reach the common people, though doubtless some of its simpler elements were familiar to them. This spirit was a new one in philosophy, though it was to the Christian Faith as ancient as itself.

In his treatment of individuals we find the same genial, tolerant spirit. Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, is a model of courtesy, and if the Jew remained unconvinced at the conclusion of the debate, it may at least be said that he was impressed by the kindly tone of his Christian opponent. For the spirit of the Christian controversialist was seldom that of his Master. Persecution

[1] Also he says significantly, *τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς οὐδὲ διαλέγομαι.*

[2] 'Gloria', which St. Augustine declaims against, *de Civ. Dei.*

[3] *Apol.* ii. 13.

by the Gentile authority, and the persistent malice of the unconverted Jew, had embittered the Christian of the second century in his intercourse with the world. Even the writer of the Epistle to Diognetus is unnecessarily contemptuous and uncharitable towards Judaism.[1] It is all the more to the credit of Justin that he rose above the natural, though deplorable, temper of the day. In one direction he manifests an unusual heat and resentment, and that is towards the dominant heresies of his time.[2] But we must remember in extenuation, that the Gnosticism of the second century threatened the Church with ruin. It was one thing to exhibit a kindly tolerance to the weaknesses of the Gentile and the blindness of the Jew; another thing to condone, by gentleness of speech, perversions of the truth which threatened the very life of the Church.

'I confess that I count it glory to be found a Christian and strive mightily to be such.'[3] Brave and humble words, worthy of this philosophic saint. Before his conversion he had been impressed with the other-worldliness of Christians and their sublime indifference to death: after his conversion he furnishes a brilliant example of the same sublime qualities. He addresses his apologies for the faith to princes whose policy towards Christianity was one of relentless repression. He is careless of personal consequences. No doubt he constantly expected to receive the martyr's crown. But in his appeal he argues as if these lords of the Empire, whose administrative measures were regulated by expediency, would be convinced by reason and moved by compassion. He assumes that they are as candid, and single-eyed, and charitable as he himself! It is simplicity of the best sort, a spiritual high-

[1] *Ep. ad Diogn.*, iii–iv, especially iv.
[2] Cruttwell, vol. ii, p. 332.
[3] *Apol.* ii. 13. Quoted by Cruttwell, vol. ii, p. 333.

mindedness. His courage would seem to have been daily exercised, and during his last stay in Rome he was confidently awaiting death, 'either by the action of the authorities, or through the machinations of Crescens his personal enemy'.[1] His expectation is fulfilled. The life which he imperilled by his Second Apology[2] is prolonged in some way or other, but it is probable that during this period his sojourn at Ephesus and his Dialogue with Trypho took place. On his return to Rome he was tried before Rusticus, the prefect of the city. The account of his martyrdom seems genuine, though doubts have been cast upon it.[3] Justin's reply to Rusticus is, however, thoroughly in character. Rusticus asks: 'Do you suppose, then, that you will ascend into heaven to receive some recompense?' Justin answers, 'I do not suppose it, but I know and am fully persuaded of it'.[4] He also professes to 'have found the final truth in Christianity after exploring all other systems'.[5]

Fascinating as the character and career of Justin, saint and martyr, are, they are far less significant than his doctrinal position. His theology was formed by his environment and by the manner in which he was compelled to employ it. For Justin's writings—those which have survived—are purely apologetic.[6] Now, defence of the faith places limitations on the material at hand. The apologist uses

[1] Cruttwell, vol. ii, p. 337.

[2] Before Lollius Urbicus, whom Justin reproaches as a betrayer of Justice.

[3] Farrar, *Lives*, pp. 143–6; also Scott-Holland, *Justin Martyr*, in *Dict. of Christian Biogr.*, p. 562.

[4] Farrar, *Lives*, id. loc.

[5] Scott-Holland, *Justin Martyr*, in *Dict. of Christian Biogr.*, p. 563.

[6] Eusebius mentions several other writings besides the *Apology* and the *Dialogue*, some of which have survived, but their genuineness is seriously called in question. Tradition, however, combined with what we know of him, points to Justin as a prolific author.

only those portions of the total content of his faith which are *ad rem*. Otherwise he would spoil his argument by overloading it, and thus would destroy the effectiveness of his appeal. He is not writing a systematic theology; he is rather refuting charges and commending the faith to outsiders. Consequently, it is not surprising to find some aspects of the faith strongly emphasized and other aspects scarcely touched upon. We have already pointed out the fragmentary manner in which the Pauline doctrine is presented. The whole faith is there, but we have to collect it, and piece it together, out of various letters written at different times to different Christian communities and under varying conditions. In a measure the same applies to St. Justin. The creative period is over, but the formative process is still going on. Under these circumstances we cannot look for exactitude of language or perfect balance and proportion in the presentation of doctrine. It is only after the age of the Great Councils that serious exception can be taken to a theologian's fluidity of thought or inaccuracy of expression. In fact, it is an anachronism to speak of either the one or the other in the case of Christian writers of the second and third centuries. So long as they keep within the lines of the Christian tradition, it is as much as we can expect, and we should be extremely grateful to these pioneers of Christian thought for, unless God had raised them up, the faith would have perished by pressure from outside and by ignorance from within. Justin Martyr was among the earliest of these pioneers.[1]

And our author undoubtedly keeps within the lines of the Christian tradition. Hellenic as he is, no one excels him in his reverence for, and practical use of, the Old Testament Scriptures. He values them because they witness to

[1] It has been constantly pointed out that the (so-called) Apostolic Fathers were not thinkers, but practical men.

Christ. He occupies common ground with a genuine son of Israel in his fervent faith in the God whose adumbrations are recorded in the Old Testament. He is a strict monotheist, and he uses the Old Testament, as the New Testament writers use it, to interpret Christ. Where he is original is in his very explicit statements of a *Praeparatio Evangelica* working among the Gentiles, and he mentions by name great Greek thinkers who were, to apply St. Paul's figure, tutors leading men to Christ.[1] He places them in juxtaposition with the lawgivers and prophets of Israel. His claim to be a true philosopher is in nothing better established than in his largeness of mind and breadth of view, whereby he is enabled to discern the Will of God fulfilling itself in many ways. But there is no departure here from New Testament principles; rather a natural, we might almost say an inevitable, development due to the Vital Force operating upon a culture different from that with which it first came into contact.

Upon the basis of his scriptural interpretation (Old Testament), which receives confirmation from Gentile sources, Justin accounts for the Incarnation of the Logos in the Person of Jesus Christ. God created by means of the Eternal Word. If He has thus created, He also has revealed Himself. He did so, first, by impressing the Divine Character on creation, and also by giving to the mind of man 'a seed of the Logos'; secondly, by becoming Man Himself. The proof of it is in Jesus Christ. Through the Incarnate Logos men can now know God. This aspect of the Divine working was naturally uppermost in Justin's mind. 'The Greeks seek after wisdom.'[2] From Socrates down through the centuries, it is the same. Truth, true knowledge, is the supreme thing. To know is to do. Therefore the idea of the Incarnation as making God known to man specially appealed to a Greek, trained in Hellenic

[1] Gal. iii. 24–5. [2] 1 Cor. i. 22.

culture and following Hellenic methods. He was a teacher of the Divine, and therefore True Knowledge, as contrasted with incomplete and perverted knowledge. The facts upon which the apologists's doctrine is based are found in the Evangelic narratives; the doctrine itself is found in the Johannine writings. 'The Logos is Jesus Christ', this is the teaching of St. John. On Justin's part the doctrine is presented in the light of ideas derived from Platonic, Stoical, and Philonic sources.[1] Justin, and those who followed a similar line of thought, developed the Logos doctrine, and made it the key of Christian metaphysics. 'Christ's significance for the world was established; his mysterious relation to God was explained; the cosmos, reason, and ethics were comprehended as one.'[2] Where Justin is original, however, is in his theory of the Germinal Word, which is a seed implanted in the hearts of men. All men participate in this Divine Flame, and, through this universal participation, he is enabled to explain the natural goodness which survived in the heathen world. This doctrine might seem to rob the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, of His unique significance, making the difference between Him and the race he came to save merely a difference of degree. And another point—there seems, to a later theology, to be a confusion of the office and functions of God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. But Justin was not conscious of these difficulties, or at least does not express them. In substance he is perfectly orthodox. Our Lord is both God and Man, and there is a Holy Ghost. He believes in the Ever-Blessed Trinity, though he does not state his faith in the categorical form of the Post-Nicene Age.[3] His sense of sin is not so intense as that of the

[1] Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, vol. ii, pp. 169–88; and Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, pp. 260–2.

[2] Harnack, *What is Christianity?* (Eng. trans.), p. 206 f.

[3] Farrar, *Lives*, p. 149.

Apostolic Age, nor as that of some later periods, and individuals, in Christian history. But then he is a Greek, and because he is a Greek, he lays stress on man's ignorance, and sometimes seems to imply that Divine Knowledge is all that man needs to make him worthy of eternal life. On the other hand, there are many statements in his writings which show that he is sound on 'the sacrifice of the death of Christ' and believes in its redeeming power.

If any confirmation were needed, his sacramental doctrine would establish what has been said above, because the sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ. To Justin, Baptism is 'regeneration' and 'new birth', and in his discussion and explanation of the Holy Eucharist [1] he clearly maintains 'a mystical incorporation with Christ', though naturally he does not define. The day of definitions had not yet dawned. All the more impressive and significant is his undeliberate witness to his own sacramental belief which he held in common with the Christians of his time. We have not here to do with a supporter of 'sacerdotal claims', but with a keen and cultured Christian layman, an independent, 'itinerant lay preacher', who did his work for Christ in his own way, while always retaining cordial relations with the Christian communities where he sojourned, and valiantly rushing to their defence when they were in distress.[2] I do not think that sufficient justice has been rendered by the Church to this tolerant, kindly Greek, who walking in the shadows, was drawn towards the Light that lighteth every man, and in that light fared through his earthly days, acting as a spectrum

[1] His familiar passage about the Eucharist is given *in extenso*: Cruttwell, *Lit. Hist.*, pp. 324–5 (*Apol.* i. 65–6). There are other incidental references. For an excellent summary, see Scott-Holland, *Dict. of Christian Biogr.*, p. 581. The whole article deserves better fate than the obscurity of a book of reference. It is not merely scholarly, but has literary distinction, a virtue not so common.

[2] E. g. in regard to the arbitrary judgement of Lollius Urbicus.

for his Master, diffusing a mild, warm radiance on all around. And yet that is hardly enough to say—there was a high passion in him also—did he not die for the truth that is in Christ Jesus?

From what has been said in this hasty review of Justin's person and writings, which while hasty is, I believe, true to facts, it will be readily perceived that the apologist was essentially Christian. As was the philosopher's cloak to his body, so was the Greek form to his theology. Both were by nature suited to him, and the dress both of body and of mind was admirably adapted to assist his teaching of the faith, since it accorded with his environment. I share the grievance of Dr. Orr [1] against Harnack for laying undue stress on the Hellenic elements in the theology of Justin, and the Alexandrian Fathers, inferring that they overlaid the original Gospel, and changed its character by the introduction of alien material—that in fact, with the best intentions in the world, they were a peril to the Apostolic faith in the same way, though not in the same degree, as were the Gnostics. The latter were responsible for an attempt to expose the faith to 'acute secularization'; the former infected the Christian communities with a subtle poison from which they have never completely recovered, secularizing them gradually and almost imperceptibly, so that the same end was reached by the slow process, as would have been reached by the more rapid one. If this means that the Christian religion is something less than, or something different (in essence) from, the New Testament faith, it is simply not true. Modern Christianity contains the original life and power as a half-grown tree contains the life and power of the seed from which it sprang. And the second and third centuries of the Church's history form a period of phenomenal development in extraordinary circumstances. Yet the presentation of the faith made by

[1] Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, pp. 44–5.

Justin and others differs less from the presentation made by St. Paul, for instance, than the theology of St. Paul differs from the first simple message of the original Twelve. Yet in spite of differences they all preach the same God, the same Jesus Christ, the same Holy Spirit. One might as justifiably complain of the excessive Alexandrine Hebraism of the Epistle to the Hebrews as of the excessive Hellenism of the Greek Fathers. Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen found salvation, inspiration, and spiritual peace in the faith which they espoused, or received, by looking to the Lord Jesus, feasting upon Him, and obeying His principles, just as millions of others before and since have done. The form was different; the essence, the substance, was the same. The early Greek Fathers and the Gnostics were as far apart theologically as are Bishop Gore and Mrs. Eddy. The former built their doctrines on what they at least considered the facts of the Divine Life on earth, and on what they considered revealed Truth; the latter built on nothing, unless their own airy speculations may be regarded as a foundation. The Gnostics took the forms of Christianity, blended them with alien ideas and erected systems according to their fancy; the earlier Greek Fathers took the contents of the faith and presented them in a way suited to their genius and their public.[1] That, I take it, is inevitable, since God has chosen men to be His agents in furthering His purpose. There is a human element in every truth that is preached to mankind. In coming to earth the truth adapts itself—contracts itself as it were—to the limitations of the sphere where it operates. The Incarnation is a standing witness to the natural necessity of such accommodation. In extending the fruits of the Incarnation to the world, and in doing it through imperfect agents,

[1] And every Christian teacher does the same thing; he cannot help it.

as God apparently wills it to be done, *a fortiori* the natural necessity obtains. Human limitations and human imperfections cling about that which comes from God, but the Divine Power furnishes a corrective, a natural corrective, which in the course of development throws off one imperfection after another.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ALEXANDRIAN THINKERS

In his edition of Hort's *Clement of Alexandria* (*Stromateis*) Professor Mayor says: 'If by "Hellenism" and "secularism" it is simply meant that when the Church overstept the limits of the Hebrew race and language, and became more fully conscious of its mission to preach the Gospel to every creature, it became also to the Greeks as Greek, to the Romans as Roman, and claimed as its own those seeds or fragments of divine teaching which it found embodied in the thoughts and institutions of other races; —if so, then, though one might object to the use of the ambiguous term "secularism", I think none who had paid attention to the subject would question the truth of the assertion. But such secularization as this is no illegitimate development of Christianity: it is only carrying out the principle which pervades the whole history of revelation.'[1] Later on Mayor asks: 'Granting that it (Hellenism) had its weak side, like all things human, can we really suppose that it would have been better for the Church and for the world, if thought and learning had been permanently excluded from the Christian community; if there had been no Paul, no Clement, no Origen, no Tertullian, no Augustine?'[2] This question, which expects an emphatic 'No' in answer, represents exactly

[1] Hort and Mayor, *Cl. Alex.* (*Stromateis*, vii), Introd., xxiii–xxiv.
[2] Ib., xxx–xxxi.

the present writer's views. While reflexion upon the subject-matter of the faith has its dangers, it is a necessary condition of its presentation to intelligent minds. Furthermore, while thought exercised upon faith is liable to error, the general exercise of the intellectual faculties ever tends to discover or to maintain truth. Most of us believe the Church is the Body of Christ, and its Spirit is the Paraclete. This makes it easy for us to understand the development of true theology and the correction of error. We believe that the Church has been divinely guided in its thought as in its activities, and by this belief we explain the course of the history of the Christian religion. Whether this explanation is accepted or another substituted, or none attempted, the phenomenon remains. The religious thought of one individual is balanced by another's; the thought of one party or generation encounters a reaction; racial tendencies are corrected by the inclusion of new peoples within the embrace of the faith. Judaistic Christianity is widened by Hellenized Christianity; the amalgam is preserved by Latin Christianity. But would these 'three measures' ever fuse and blend together if there were not a Vital Force to act as a cohering, coalescing principle? Harnack seems to recognize this in the passage which I have quoted in reference to Paulinism.[1] If men sundered by centuries, by race, and by habits, can at epochal moments in the Church's history revive religion through appeals to the spiritual teaching of the Apostolic Age, it goes a long way to prove that, however much it defies analysis, there is a permanent vital element in Christianity, and that this vital element enables the Christian body to be self-corrective and to arrest and modify 'secularization' when it becomes necessary to do so.

As a rule, however, this secularization, which has lately been discovered with so much misgiving, is a dangerous-

[1] p. 204.

looking word for a natural process, namely, that of the accommodation of the Christian religion to its environment. By this accommodation it is able to carry on its work. Without it no impression can be made. Palestinian Christianity had not the qualities for the task of converting the Empire, but St. Paul with his mixed training and wide sympathies gave a mighty impulse to the cause, using the synagogues and the proselytes as a lever, and gathering mixed communities of Jews and Gentiles. As time went on the Jewish element became negligible, through absorption, through lapse, and through the vast influx of Gentiles. The tone and colour of the Church became Greek. The Christian society was accommodating itself to the genius of those whom it came to evangelize. But it did not thereby lose its character, its interior life, its Vital Force. That is indestructible. It would be easy to collect out of Justin's writings, for instance, everything that was of spiritual importance to the Palestinian Christian. In addition to that there was something taken out of the common life of the time, something wholesome and good, assimilated by the Vital Force, and consecrated to fresh and holier uses. It did not overwhelm or corrupt the interior life, it expanded and enriched it. Of course, there have been periods when world elements have flowed into the Church in such volume that there has been peril—the assimilation is less rapid, the powers of absorption are temporarily clogged. This happened in the age of Constantine; it happened in the early Mediaeval period; it happened, within narrower limits, in the Georgian (English) period. Yet the semi-heathenism of the fourth century and the bitterness of credal controversy are followed by the Gregories, Basil, and Chrysostom in the East; and by Augustine and his influence in the West; the barbarism of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries is followed by St. Anselm, St. Bernard, and the great renascence of true

religion in the thirteenth century; the deadness and materialism of the eighteenth century (in England) bears in its womb the Evangelical revival. It is always the same —the Christian Society has within itself something which is an antidote to poison, a corrective principle, and more than that, a sanctifying power, which enables it *in time* to transform the elements of the world.

The philosophical Fathers of the early Church were not, however, semi-heathens. They were devout followers of Christ who were the products of their age and race and spoke to their contemporaries in terms which they could understand. Of their essential Christianity there can be no doubt. It is revealed in their writings; it is testified by their lives; in the case of at least two of the most influential of them, it is sealed by their death.[1] It has been convenient for me to link Justin Martyr with the great Alexandrian teachers, not because there was any close connexion between them in method and purpose, but because their spirit was similar. Justin's literary efforts —those of undoubted authenticity—are purely defensive. He does not state all he knows or all he believes about the Christian faith. He brings forward those aspects of the faith which, he thinks, will commend it to outsiders, or convince opponents. But Clement and Origen are constructive theologians. Yet in this they are like the Apologist—they have a reverence for the philosophy of the Greeks, and they present Christianity as the consummation, confirmation, and justification of the metaphysical researches of Hellenic thinkers. This is in the background of all their teaching. Of course they believe it to be more than that. They recognize the significance of the Old Dispensation quite as strongly as the Ortho-

[1] Justin Martyr and Origen. If not technically a martyr, Origen was virtually so; see Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, p. 424. Certainly Athanasius was a confessor.

doxasts, but they make the two testimonies parallel. In fact Clement goes farther still—it is perhaps his greatest claim to a respectful hearing on the part of the whole Church in every succeeding generation. 'There is one river of Truth', he declares, 'but many streams fall into it on this side and on that.'[1] Its two main tributaries, however, are from Hebraism and Hellenism. The late Dr. Bigg renders him homage in the following words: 'Among Christian writers none till very recent times, not even Origen, has so clear and grand a conception of the development of spiritual life.'[2] St. Paul, both by allusion and by illustration, teaches the inherent goodness of Nature and of Man. Indeed, to read the fourfold Biography of the Evangelists with understanding eyes is to realize that Jesus of Nazareth was not only the Messiah of the Jews, the Great Moral Exemplar, the Teacher, the fulfilment of the Sacrificial System, and its justification, the representative and perfection of humanity (the Son of Man); but He was God Incarnate, the Eternal Logos, the Revealer of His Father, and so the Revealer of Truth. Not only so, but he gathered up the various elements of truth which He, as Eternal Logos, had implanted through the long centuries of evolutionary development, and exhibited them to the world in His Own Person.[3] In Him Truth finds its unity. To approach the Truth is to approach Him, to approach Him is to approach the Eternal God. And the Eternal God is the beginning and the end of all true knowledge.[4] This is the true Christian Gnosticism, as opposed to the false Gnosticism of the heretical and semi-heathen sects.

[1] Cl. Alex., *Strom.*, i. 5, 29.

[2] *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 74.

[3] The ancient Greek philosophers sought for it. Clement declares its discovery in Jesus Christ.

[4] Clement says the true Gnostic should strive 'to become like to God'.

The Incarnation having taken place the Logos became 'the Saviour', 'the Tutor', and 'Teacher' of those who have been 'initiated' by the laver of illumination into the true mysteries. Those who have been initiated are Christians, since they have been admitted into the Church by baptism. In the face of Clement's philosophical bias it is interesting to notice his evangelical employment of the title 'Saviour'. This is quite frequent in *Stromateis*, and the cognate words 'salvation' and 'saving'. But one must recognize that there is very little reference to the saving power of the Cross[1]—the Incarnation is the preoccupation of Clement's religious thought. No doubt the ideas of the mystery-religions and the terminology in which they were clothed greatly influenced Clement, for he was a man of his time, and in order to interpret and commend Christianity he made use of language which was either common to Christianity and the higher Paganism, or at least capable of appreciation by both. Already we have seen in the New Testament itself instances of such common use. And why not? There was no stricture laid upon the Church to illustrate its life and principles solely by Hebrew examples. 'A doctrine or custom is not necessarily un-Christian because it is "Greek" or "pagan". I know of no stranger perversity than for men who rest the whole weight of their religion upon "history" to suppose that Our Lord meant to raise an universal religion on a purely Jewish basis.'[2]

The end of Clement's system is the knowledge of God. Very daringly in one place, which I cannot for the moment locate, he declares that, if a man were forced to choose between eternal salvation and knowledge of God, he must perforce choose the knowledge of God. This is charac-

[1] Inge, 'Alexandrian Theology', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. i, p. 314.

[2] Id., *Christian Mysticism*, Appendix B, p. 350.

teristic of the man and his race.[1] It is clear that just as the brilliant but fanciful Gnostic teachers put forth their 'systems', so Clement resolved that Christianity should have its system also. The design is better than its execution. If, however, Clement had done nothing more than give an outline of his system, the indebtedness of Christianity to him would have been very great. Instead of that, he puts his plan into action, and a series of treatises is the result which presents to the reader the philosophy of Christianity in an ascending scale. Nothing like it had ever before been offered to the faithful. We have observed the fragmentary and casual manner in which Christian doctrine had hitherto been put forth. But the time had arrived for the gathering together and presentation as one whole, of the principles of the faith. The time had come for a synthesis, and Clement had the synthetic mind. Unfortunately, he was unsystematic and desultory, though in justice it should be said that these defects appear chiefly in that part of his work where he is of set purpose unmethodical, even to the title of his book, *Miscellanies* (*Stromateis*). It is evident, I think, that this latter work [2] was intended to be merely provisional, or at least was composed as a sort of interlude between *the Tutor* and *the Teacher*, or perhaps as a kind of overture to *the Teacher* —but I am anticipating.

The *Protrepticus* is an address to the Greeks, his fellow-countrymen, to turn from the philosophies and religions of Paganism to the Christian faith, which he endeavours to exhibit as vastly superior. It satisfies the human cravings to which the old systems bore testimony. The Gospel of Christ is the 'New Song' which is yet older than creation

[1] He was probably of pure Hellenic blood, an Athenian by birth and training (Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, pp. 72–3; Westcott, 'Clement', in *Dict. of Christian Biogr.*).

[2] de Faye calls attention to the fact that there is no appearance of finality in the Miscellanies; see Mayor, *Stromateis*, Introd., p. xvi.

—more powerful than any music of Orpheus or Arion.[1] If the *Protrepticus* is an appeal to the heathen, the *Paedagogus* is a course of instruction to the neophyte. As Clement himself declares, it is a rule of life growing with increase of faith to enable young Christians ' to receive the higher knowledge of philosophy '.[2] It displays Christian faith in action—in the life of the believer. It is practical, but rests on conviction, and is preparatory to knowledge. The Tutor is, of course, the Incarnate Word. Quite apart from its specific value, this treatise furnishes an admirable picture of contemporary manners.[3] Many Christians are content to stop at this elementary stage. The ' simpliciores ' or ' Orthodoxasts ', of whom Clement and Origen speak with perhaps natural impatience, are suspicious of knowledge (γνῶσις). They took their stand upon ' the bare faith ',[4] which was perhaps already summed up in the instruction of catechumens, and thus possessed an objective as well as subjective meaning. In the face of the attractive, fascinating, but exceedingly dangerous, Gnostic teaching, so widely prevalent in the Greek-speaking world, which had Alexandria as one of its chief centres, it was well for the simple folk—who must have constituted, as they always do, the majority of the faithful—that they had a form of sound words to protect them against specious heresies. Nevertheless, men of philosophical training and reflective minds could not desist from examining their faith, comparing it with other religions and other codes, illustrating its teaching from what had been said by Socrates or written by Plato, comparing it with the many theories and beliefs which ran riot round about them in this intellectually restless metropolis of Egypt. It was for

[1] Cl. Alex., *Protrep.* i, § 2 (Klotz).
[2] *εἰς ἐπιστήμης γνωστικῆς παραδοχήν.*
[3] Using the word in its old and proper sense as including morals.
[4] *ψιλὴ ἡ πίστις.*

such that Clement wrote. Under the guiding hand of Pantaenus, it was perhaps its philosophical and mystical potentiality which first attracted the young Athenian to the Faith. On the other hand, Ammonius Saccas began as a Christian, and ended as the founder of Neo-Platonism. Perhaps the rigidity and fanaticism of the Orthodoxasts repelled him. However that may be, Clement recognized the danger of intellectual contraction. He perceived that the subject-matter of Christianity provided material for devout contemplation on the highest plane. He made use of the distinction drawn by St. Paul of milk for babes and strong meat for men.[1] Moreover, he had the example of the Fourth Gospel before his eyes as a spiritual Gospel. Christianity had in it something adapted to every human capacity, and why should the educated and the wise be debarred from exercising their divinely imparted faculties (for he believed in this impartation of Reason by God with all his soul)—why should such choice spirits stifle reverent inquiry upon the substance of the Revelation which came from the same source as their gift of Reason ?[2] Accordingly, he provides a guide to the true Gnosis (γνῶσις) for those who are able to use it. That at least was his intention, for the Tutor was to be followed by the Teacher.[3] Instead of that we have the *Miscellanies*, which was merely something thrown off, so I take it, as part of the preparation for the great treatise, much in the same manner as modern scholars publish in reviews and magazines fragments of some important work they intend ultimately to publish. Probably he died before his great task was accomplished.[4]

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 2; cf. Heb. v. 12–14 and 1 Pet. ii. 2.

[2] Reason with Plato and his followers always included more than the mere rational faculty (modern definition), and embraced a certain mystical quality; see Adam, *Vitality of Platonism*, p. 130.

[3] The distinction between παιδαγωγός and διδάσκαλος is too familiar for discussion.

[4] His death occurred before A.D. 216.

From the *Stromateis*, however, we are able to gather much of Clement's point of view. 'They are a rambling account of the moral side of Gnosis. . . . The logical treatise which forms Book VIII may have been intended as an introduction to the Christian metaphysics.'[1] Therefore we cannot speak with certainty as to the μεγάλα μυστήρια and the ἐποπτεία to which the author so often refers, and which it was his purpose to disclose. His metaphysics—in some respects we can hardly call it theology—is more frankly Hellenic than anything so far in Christian literature. In fact I doubt if Hellenization ever went farther than it did in the case of Clement. Origen is less speculative on the doctrine of the Nature of God than Clement, or at least more in harmony with the Christian tradition, though Clement honestly intends to base his speculations on ὁ κανὼν τῆς ἐκκλησίας (sometimes ἀληθείας), the rule of the Church (of truth). He seems to carry to an extreme the conception which later found expression in the Thirty-Nine Articles—'God is without body parts and passions.'[2] As summed up by Bigg, his doctrine of God is the following: 'We know not what He is, only what He is not. He has absolutely no predicates, no genus, no differentia, no species. He is neither unit nor number; He has neither accident nor substance. Names denote either qualities or relations; God has neither.' Then follows this quotation: 'He is formless and nameless, though we sometimes give Him titles which are not to be taken in their proper sense; the One, the Good, Intelligence or Existence, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord.'[3] Mayor pertinently asks: 'Is there any real distinction between this deification of zero and a speculative atheism?' And then goes on to say: 'In point of fact, however, it is with Clement only an exaggerated way of saying that man can know

[1] Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 92, note.
[2] Art. i.
[3] *Strom.*, v. 81.

nothing of God except through God's revelation of Himself in the Word. Nor does it appear that this abstract speculation had any influence on Clement's positive view of the Divine Nature.'[1] In his famous essay, *Clement d'Alexandrie*, de Faye interprets Clement's conception of God very well—'Elle est d'un côté marquée de l'effigie de Platon, de l'autre elle est chrétienne.'[2] 'No man hath seen God at any time'[3] is the truth he emphasizes. It is the transcendence of God, the fact that He is 'past finding out', that He is Infinite, which possesses the mind of Clement. It is here that he Platonizes, and he does so the more freely, because he believes that, in the conception of God, Plato, and the Transcendentalists who followed Plato, are in essential agreement with Revelation. It is not surprising that in the zest of his speculations he should strip the Primal Deity of many of those attributes which are positive, and which belong to God as a Personal Being. Probably he was striving to prove nothing more than that God is *per se* indemonstrable, and requires the Word to reveal Him. The result of his explorations shows that human thought cannot procure for us an adequate impression of the Being of God. Here was a learned and holy man making use of the accumulated wisdom of the philosophical world from Plato to Philo, and even to his own generation, testing it by 'the rule of Truth', and yet unable to offer any conception of God beyond that of 'bare Force, . . . a Cause divided by an impassable gulf from all its effects'.[4] We must, however, remember that Clement was not dogmatizing on these transcendent problems, but merely thinking aloud, and that his exaggerations of Platonism are constantly corrected by such statements as 'God takes pleasure in our salvation; His

[1] Mayor, *Stromateis*, Introd., p. xxxix.
[2] *Clem. d'Alex.*, p. 228.
[3] 1 John iv. 12.
[4] Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 95.

nature is profoundly moral. He is good because He *wills* to do good, and not like an automaton.' [1]

And the grand corrective to these metaphysical speculations is his doctrine of Christ. The basis of it is the Logos doctrine of Philo, made real and historical by the fact of the Incarnation. ' Hear ye who are afar off, and ye who are near. The Word is concealed from no one. He is common light ; He shines on all ; there is no darkness in the world. Let us hasten to salvation, let us hasten to the Regeneration.' [2] For Clement, the Incarnation is the central truth of the Christian Faith. Under the Johannine declaration, ' No man hath seen God at any time ', he is inclined to wander where his pious reflexions lead him ; but the Eternal Word-become-man gives him proper orientation, and makes of him a true Christian teacher. The anchor of his mysticism, that which constitutes him the true, and not the false, Gnostic, is the complementary evangelic declaration, ' the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (him) '.[3] His philosophy is transmuted into religion by its contact with ' the Word become flesh '. And it is a contact which is retained. For one airy speculation we have ten valuable spiritual interpretations or moral directions.

Clement proposed to himself ' the complete training of the true Gnostic ; in other words, the perfect and enlightened Christian '.[4] The first two portions of it are carefully done in (1) the Address or Exhortation to the Greeks (Protrepticus), (2) the Tutor (Paedagogus) ; the *third* part, and that which would have been most characteristic of him, was never completed, though probably we have the *disjecta membra* of it in the *Miscellanies* (*Stromateis*), and probably portions of a work entitled *Outlines* (*Hypo-*

[1] *Strom.*, vii. 3, 42 ; also vi. 104 ; also Inge, ' Alexandrian Theology ', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, p. 314. [2] *Protrepticus*, ix.
[3] John i. 18 ; 1 John iv. 14. [4] Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, p. 364.

typoses) might have found a place in the *Teacher* (*Didascalus*), as the third and last of the series was to be called. The *Outlines* survive only in fragments, some of them of doubtful genuineness,[1] and it is chiefly on the evidence of the *Outlines* that he has been accounted heretical by Photius (though mildly), and others.. We have no means of testing these charges, which may have arisen from misunderstanding.

But to proceed—Clement uses Christian material in a Greek way. He takes the facts and verities of the Christian faith, and places them in a framework which reminds one of the courses of training prescribed in the Pythagorean system.[2] There is Purification to which the Protrepticus corresponds; Initiation, including rudimentary instruction, represented by the Paedagogus; Vision, on the basis of the two former, and interpreted by Didascalus. The young Christian is now prepared to seek after Gnosis, and under the guidance of the *Teacher* is brought 'into the vestibule of the Father'.[3] It is the object of the Gnostic to obtain complete control of the passions[4] so that they are no longer even felt, the only emotion surviving, and that of a spiritual and heavenly sort, is Love.[5] Faith[6] is indispensable as a foundation; out of faith grows knowledge (more than an intellectual grace)[7]; out of knowledge love is born. Clement believed that he was following 'the canon of the Church', merely adapting it and applying it as the situation demanded. It is what St. Paul did, what

[1] 'There is every reason to believe that (these fragments) are merely quotations from Gnostic writers with a view to commenting upon them' (Mayor, *Cl. Alex., Strom.* iv, lxi; also Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 94, note.

[2] Farrar, *Lives*, id. loc.

[3] Quoted by Inge, 'Alex. Theol.', id. loc.

[4] ἀπάθεια.

[5] ἀγάπη.

[6] πίστις.

[7] 'In Origen, σοφία is a higher term than γνῶσις' (Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 89, note).

St. John did, what every teacher worthy of the name would do. If this is secularization, the more we have of it the better—in fact we cannot help ourselves—for it is the principle of adaptation to environment. The leaven placed in touch with the meal produces bread which is wholesome and palatable to those who feed upon it.

It does not, however, follow that what was produced in Alexandria generally, and the result obtained through Clement's thought and influence in particular, are of universal application. In spite of its encyclopaedic range, there were deficiencies in Clement's presentation. It was too Hellenic and too cultivated in manner and tendency to be effective outside his own generation and entourage, except with scattered individuals. The Christian life as an Education is a lofty and inspiring ideal, but there are other aspects of the Christian religion which are equally true, and have a wider appeal. After false Gnosticism had been destroyed, probably very much through the instrumentality of Clement, while to a certainty its death-blow was administered by his great successor, Origen, the true Gnosis lost in favour and popularity. Its *raison d'être* was gone. Furthermore, there was an instinctive feeling that distinctions drawn between those of simple faith and the more spiritually cultivated were out of harmony with the religion of Christ. However much the philosophic fathers represented that the difference was one of religious capacity—that any one could be a follower of Gnosis who would develop his spiritual power—the emphasis was sure to shift to secular qualifications, to those of intellect, education, and the like. Besides this, it tended to erect barriers between Christian and Christian, and produced spiritual pride on one side and resentment on the other. Consequently the Church sloughed off these dangerous features. After Origen we find very little of this division of Christians into classes or stages—one which

holds the 'popular irrational faith' leading to 'somatic Christianity'; the other, the 'spiritual Christianity' with which Gnosis or Wisdom endows the recipient.

Connected with Clement's principle of Gnosis is that of salvation by revelation. This is truly Christian just as his doctrine of Gnosis is essentially Christian, but it is influenced by his Greek thought and Greek environment. Revelation provokes knowledge on the part of the one receiving it, but Gnosis is conveyed in other ways than through pure reason. Here the analogy of the Mystery religions assists him. I have already noted the large element of truth, true conceptions, and true aspirations contained in the best of these. This was the element which caused St. Paul to utilize some of its terminology. St. Clement appropriated still more. He perceived that knowledge in the Mysteries was conveyed by spectacle and drama, and that there is a spectacular and dramatic quality in the Christian rites. That even to the Greek there are other avenues of knowledge than the intellectual is demonstrated by the popularity of the Mystery cults and the general respect accorded to the best of them by philosophers like Plato, whose purest Idealism is interpenetrated by emotion and an imaginative quality, which have their basis in the Orphic and Eleusinian rites rather than in the official and popular mythology. Aristotle says that the initiated 'do not learn anything, but experience impressions',[1] using the verb *μανθάνειν* as of a purely mental process, which no doubt is its strict meaning. However, Clement did not have to go outside the range of contemporaneous life to find illustration and confirmation of either the faith or the worship of the Christian Church. 'There were the original elements in these Mysteries . . . which were akin to Christianity and helped to prepare the way for it: and there were other

[1] *οὐ μαθεῖν τι δεῖν ἀλλὰ παθεῖν*; also Inge, ib., App. B, p. 352.

elements which . . . could easily be absorbed in it.'[1] It is probable that in his pre-Christian days Clement had been a member of some Mystery-cult. At any rate his writings are full of mystic language and the mystic circle of ideas. This is quite consistent with the whole conception of religion whereby that which has been revealed through the Incarnation of the Logos is the consummation and perfection of the feeble, flickering lights which were not wholly quenched in the darkness of pre-Christian days. He saw these lights in Hebraism and Hellenism; in the Law of Moses and the speculations of Plato; in the moral code of Stoicism, and in the worship, and the spiritual aspiration, of the Mysteries. Modern students of 'comparative religion', as it is sometimes rather loosely called, talk glibly (some of them) of the 'broken lights' of Buddha and Confucius, assuming, or leading their readers to assume, that this breadth and liberality of view are products of the present generation. Here was a Christian teacher who conceived the same principle and applied it to theology and ethics about A. D. 200! As a matter of fact, in either the second or twentieth centuries the Christian religion is simply seeking points of contact with the truth which surrounds it and then assimilating it to itself.

I shall close this brief review of one of the most original, if not most profound, of early Christian theologians by two appreciations, one English and the other French, and both characteristic: 'Clement was not a deep or consistent thinker, and the task which he has set himself is clearly beyond his strength. But he gathers up most of the religious and philosophical ideas of his time, and weaves them together into a system which is permeated by his cultivated, humane and genial personality.'[2] The

[1] See Mayor, *Cl. Alex., Strom.*, Introd. lv, for list of mystic terms used by Clement; many of them, however, can be traced back to New Testament times. [2] Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 88.

second is as follows: 'We cannot be indifferent to him (Clement) and his work. He is the true creator of ecclesiastical theology. In him the rational and mystical elements are equally mixed. He has a beautiful trust and a noble serenity which mark the depth of his Christianity. He feels himself possessed of a divine virtue which ensures him the victory. He fears no one. He dares to measure himself against the philosophy and the spirit of his age, because he feels able to dominate them, i. e. to appropriate all that they offer of good. He feels in himself that the Truth has made him free. He is at once the firmest of believers and the most inquisitive and independent spirit that has perhaps ever appeared in the Church.'[1] While the latter is the more eulogistic summary, I am inclined to think it is the more just.

We are following so far as possible the line of action which Christianity adopted in its contact with the Hellenized world, and the reaction of the world upon the Church. This can best be done, in the writer's view, by considering types of character or condition, rather than attempting a minute examination of the whole field. In Origen we have an influence and personality more commanding than those of Clement, though in many ways not so characteristic. He was not so original as his predecessor but more profound; not so philosophical but more systematic; not so Hellenic but more Christian. I do not mean more Christian in character, for so far as we can learn, Clement exhibited the Christian life in a beautifully attractive form. Yet Origen, by his own irrevocable action on one occasion,[2] illustrates the growth of a non-Christian asceticism in the early Church, the antithesis of the self-discipline and self-control which are exercised on the

[1] de Faye, *Relation of Christianity to Greek Philosophy*. Quoted by Mayor, *Cl. Alex., Strom.*, Introd., p. lxii.

[2] Farrar, *Lives*, pp. 397 ff.

principle that the body and its appetites are the servants, not the enemies, of the spirit. Apart from this one instance of a tendency rather Gnostic than Christian, Origen's whole point of view is more clearly Christian than that of Clement. He appears to have been born into the Faith—Clement was a convert. Thus Origen breathed the Christian atmosphere, prayed Christian prayers, thought Christian thoughts from earliest childhood. The action of the Faith is quiet, gradual, continuous. 'Christianity comes into the world, not as an idea to be logically developed according to the needs of controversy, but as a fact of history. . . . At first it seemed a concrete fact among other facts, no doubt with consequences of its own, but not greatly disturbing the rest. Men needed time to find out that its relation to other facts must be organic . . . so that it would not leave unaltered any single conception which bears upon religion.' [1] The Faith was no longer, what it seems to have been to Clement, the Great Experiment, to which he submitted the thought and ethics of the world, sure of its infallibility himself yet anxious to convince others, but the one essential, dynamic force, shaping and moulding all things to itself. The two Fathers occupy much common ground. There is the same wide and humane outlook, a similar recognition and employment of Greek philosophy to the elucidation of Christian doctrine, but in Origen the relation of thought and religion has become closer, and in the process the thought is more definitely Christianized. Greek, and possibly Oriental, ideas are absorbed and transmuted. Assimilation has become easier; resistance less stubborn. Instead of observing in the growth of Christianity a gradual secularization of its doctrine and 'way of Life', I am strongly moved by the evidence to note an opposite tendency, namely, a gradual Christianization of the world's thought and conduct. There are fluctuations

[1] Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 105.

in the development recessions here and there, and now and then, but they are the fluctuations of a flowing, not an ebbing tide.

The former Alexandrian attempted a Christian Theology. The conception was magnificent, but the actual structure was rambling, and the portions which were to give symmetry and significance to the whole were never completed. The ground was merely marked out and some of the foundations laid. Origen's work is less grandiose, but more systematic. Yet it is doubtful that Origen could have made such a strong and logical contribution to Christian thought, if he had not been supported by the antecedent labours of Clement. His chief dogmatic work is *de Principiis*, written rather for the learned than for the simple, of which large fragments survive in the *Philocalia*.[1] It deals with God, Creation, Redemption, and the Holy Scriptures. He sets forth the *regula fidei*—the series of doctrines which all who name the name of Christ, *ipso facto*, recognize. Beyond this there is vast room for devout speculation, and he proceeds to deduce, infer, and conjecture with a richness of imagination and a spiritual power which have caused him to be at once a champion of the true Faith and an object of suspicion to those who hold it.

If he is 'the Father of Arianism',[2] as some one calls him, he is also the Father of Nicene Christianity. He constitutes a necessary stage in the development of religious thought. To call him a heretic is to condemn all those who use intellectual processes in the pursuit of theological truth, and who strive to attain knowledge of mysteries in regard to which the Church has so far made no pronouncement. He was engaged in battling with unbelievers

[1] Westcott, art. 'Origen', in *Dict. Christian Biogr.*; Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, p. 437.

[2] Yet the Arians never appealed to him! (Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 323).

and with the current heresies of his day.[1] If in doing so he was led into daring statements relative to doctrines not yet *de fide*, it should be remembered to his credit that he gave the death-blow to Gnosticism, that he raised the intellectual tone of his generation of Christians, that he was the chief factor in preparing the Church for its struggle with the Arians. It is one of the ingratitudes of history that he whom even Jerome described as ' a teacher of the Church second only to the great Apostle ', who was venerated by the orthodox Fathers of the Nicene Age,[2] who was persecuted by malice and ignorant fanaticism during his life, and virtually died a martyr's death, should be denied not only a place in orthodox hagiologies, but should have his memory depreciated by cruel misrepresentation and distrust.

Though Origen's free speculations on the basis of what had been revealed and was firmly held by the Church, two new principles were evolved which were of vast importance in subsequent controversies. He brought into view the conception of ' eternal generation ' of the Son from the Father, that is, a timeless derivation of the Father's Essence, and a timeless possession of it by the Son. In Clement there is an eternal distinction between the two Persons of the Blessed Trinity, but he does not succeed in determining the relation of the Primal Source and the Eternal Logos. Origen, however, makes this relation clear, as well as giving to it a continuous and dynamic effect. In doing so he develops some thought on the office and function of the Holy Spirit whose operations had as yet received but little consideration. There is in the Godhead a ' living movement . . . and ever-circling life, in

[1] Though he did not believe the Faith required an Apology, he undertook to reply to the criticisms of Celsus, at the request of a friend.

[2] Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, pp. 321–3.

virtue of which the Son is eternally begotten of the Father and the Spirit eternally proceeds from both'.[1] If, as Christians were generally agreed, Christ was the Son of God in a peculiar sense, the relation could not be of a temporal nature. It must therefore belong to a higher order than that of time. It cannot have a date fixed before which the Son of God was not.[2] There are no dates; it is a process of eternity. In something of this fashion Origen arrived at his belief in the Eternal Generation of the Son—a doctrine which from its intrinsic merit, from its conformity to the rule of faith and its correspondence to the instinct of the Christian Church, became one of the foundation-stones of Catholic dogmatics. Thus was the way cleared for Athanasius.

The second characteristic doctrine of Origen was dependent upon the first, but it was this which perhaps exposed him to charges of being the precursor and source of Arianism. 'From God's standpoint, the Son is the hypostasis appointed by and *subordinated to* Him.'[3] The Father is the Primal Source[4] of the Godhead. In Him the Essence is underived, but the Son, the full and perfect Image[5] of the Father, holds the Essence as derived from Him. The Spirit is also derived. The obvious error appears when he speaks loosely of the Son as δεύτερος θεός. Inadequate, contradictory, and dangerously misleading views creep into theological speculation even in the case of interpreters of the Faith who have the limits of safety fixed by the authority of the Church. How much more may Origen be forgiven since he was, in regard to these subjects, sailing an uncharted sea? Nevertheless, looking backward from the accumulated experience of

[1] Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, pp. 85–6.
[2] οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν (*de Princ.*, i. e, 9; in Rom. i. 5).
[3] See Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, vol. ii, p. 357.
[4] ἀρχή. [5] εἰκών.

about eighteen centuries of Christian life we can see that this loose statement, either signified Dualism [1] with a tendency towards polytheism, or else gave direct encouragement to the view that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity was not fully God, since self-existence and ingenerateness are Divine attributes which are denied to Him. This certainly played into the hands of the heretics of the Nicene period. It is, however, easy to understand and appreciate Origen's difficulties, which were aggravated, as were those of Clement, by his Platonic conception of God, an extreme transcendentalism. How was the gulf between this Transcendental God (τὸ ὄν), and Creation to be bridged? His faith could perform the task, but his theology only partially. The task had to be passed on to a thinker whose mind was less impregnated with philosophy, and more content to rest on Holy Scripture and the Christian tradition. Yet Athanasius built on the foundation of the Christian Platonist, and would not have been Athanasius but for Origen.

In spite of such tenets of the Platonic philosophy as the pre-existence of the soul, his Philonic method of scriptural interpretation which he was inclined to carry to an extreme, his theoretical conjecture as to the ultimate salvation of the Devil, and other 'tentative suggestions' which were not seriously held opinions, but were more in the way of exercise,[2] Origen was a great and trustworthy teacher of the Christian faith. As some one says, he was the theologian of a period of transition, and so was exposed to misunderstanding. He was a man of fine liberality and breadth of view, and so roused the antagonism of lesser spirits and narrower minds. His originality and profound thought were beyond the comprehension of men who only skim the surface. He was an immensely prolific writer, and dealing with many problems, he offered a broad front to hostile

[1] Tritheism if extended to the Paraclete. [2] γυμνασίας χάριν.

criticism. The testimony of one who seems to deprecate his influence, and that of Clement, as tending to 'secularize' the faith, confirms the view maintained in these pages that he was in tone and substance a Christian teacher in the true line of succession: 'Moreover in connection with the consideration of main Biblical thoughts (God as Love, God as the Father, regeneration, adoption, etc.) we find in both Clement and Origen passages which, free from the trammels of the system, reproduce and set forth the preaching of the Gospel in a surprisingly appropriate way.' [1] Not after all a matter for surprise, since the Gospel is the preoccupation of their lives, and to commend it to the world the sole aim of their self-sacrificing labours.

Living in a Greek-speaking world with Greek habits of thought, both the Alexandrians used the form to which they were accustomed. 'It was Origen who created the dogmatic of the Church, and did more than any other man to win the Old World to the Christian religion.' [2] The effect of his teaching is illustrated in the beautiful *Panegyric* composed by his great pupil, Gregory Thaumaturgus, which deserves to be quoted entire, but I shall content myself with the sentence which marks the moment when Origen has brought his Pagan pupils by a gradual ascent of education to Christ, then 'like some spark lighting on our souls, love was kindled and burst into flame within us, love to the Holy Logos, the most holy object of all, who attracts all to Himself by His unutterable beauty.' [3] The form of instruction was certainly Greek of that perplexing syncretistic period, but the substance was the same Gospel which convinced St. Thomas, which was revealed to Saul on the Damascus way, and which is unfolded with such mystic power by the Fourth Evangelist.

[1] Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, vol. ii, p. 376.
[2] Id., ib., vol. ii, section *Origen*.
[3] Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, p. 441.

CHAPTER XV

THE NEOPLATONISTS

Among the younger contemporaries of Origen was one named Plotinus, and it is with him that the religious philosophy of Neoplatonism is chiefly associated. From one point of view this system was a development of Platonism, as its name implies ; on the other it was a by-product of Christianity. There were also traces of Stoicism, especially in its ethics. Indeed all idealistic schools contributed something to its philosophy. Yet it is much to the credit of its leaders that its teaching is not a mere patchwork, but possessed a unity which was derived from its idea of God. God is a Formless Essence, utterly transcendent ' without qualities, internal activities, or outgoing action whatsoever '.[1] It (we cannot say ' He ', for It is all abstract and impersonal)—It has no desire of any kind, no longing, no emotion. It is above and beyond all such. It is perfect, and therefore seeks nothing outside Itself. Yet it is this Formless Essence, apathetic, wanting nothing, which is the quest of Plotinus and his fellows. The soul longs for God, ' for since the soul is different from God, but springs from Him, it longs after Him by a necessity of its nature.' [2] ' The One does not strive after us . . . but we have to strive after It.' The manner of doing this is to empty oneself of all action, emotion, and even thought, that it become as far as possible like God. Then the ground is cleared for Ecstasy and Vision, for communion with this spaceless, timeless Essence which is very near to every one of us if we only adopt the proper spirit, attitude, and method of approach.

[1] Von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, p. 82 ; also Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, p. 243. The quotation is from the Enneads.

[2] Quoted from Plotinus by von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, p. 84.

Plotinus attached an importance to *revelation*, to divine disclosures, which were made to the soul ready to receive such a blessing. Neoplatonism is a philosophy of revelation, and this, combined with its preoccupation in problems of religious interest, makes it a religious philosophy. It gets rid of the old Platonic Dualism. 'The world is an image of the Divine Mind.'[1] He asks: 'What more beautiful image of the Divine Mind could there be than this world, except the world yonder?'[2] The spirit and tone of Neoplatonism have wonderful affinities with Christianity, but its abstract speculations and its Formless Essence are a poor substitute for the warmth and life in the Christian Object of devotion. The new Platonism also has its Trinity. There is the One, the Absolute; the Intelligence, occupying an intermediate position, corresponding to the Logos; the Soul, 'the One and Many' —God as action—corresponding to the Holy Spirit. But the resemblance to Christian 'high theology' is mainly superficial. Mackintosh says: 'Their (the Neoplatonists') Trinity and the Trinity of Church writers had scarcely anything in common but the number three.'[3] It is not in their metaphysics, as such, that the (unconscious) sympathy with Christian teaching lies. Clement, and Origen even more so, built their theology upon historical realities. To the Neoplatonists facts were indifferent except when they clogged the upward quest of the Spirit towards its God. Then they were hindrances. No, it is in their thoroughgoing Idealism that they draw closer to Christ, and in their conviction that it is possible to enter into communion with the One by giving up human wisdom, giving up self, and trusting oneself to God, by seeking to know Him in His way and not in ours, emptying ourselves

[1] Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 93.
[2] Plotinus, quoted by Inge.
[3] *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 161.

of what is unlike Him and so establishing contact. 'In perfect receptivity and repose the Soul is able to touch and grasp God directly, losing itself in the Divine with a silent rapture of ecstasy.' [1]

Thus revelation is demanded by Neoplatonism, and it is the first time that Hellenic philosophy has definitely provided for revelation—or rather made it, as Plotinus did, the essential part of the system. In doing so, the Neoplatonist not only put the coping stone on philosophy, as such, but confessed its failure to reach ultimate Truth by human effort. 'Neoplatonism was, on the one side, the completion of ancient philosophy, and on another, its abolition.' [2] This teaching could never satisfy a world seeking for God. It was for the spiritual aristocrat. What the world craved and needed was a religion which could point the way, and then move the heart of the simplest, as of the wisest, to seek after the Living God—point the way, and move the heart of mankind, not provide a few choice souls with 'divine disclosures'. The disposition [3] of philosophic Christians like Clement and Origen, a disposition in keeping with the Spirit of the Age, was to classify Christians according to spiritual knowledge, but the Church with true instinct has always resisted the inclination. It never succumbed to this most subtle Greek influence, for it recognized through the example and power of the Cross that the chief thing is not self-cultivation but self-sacrifice. To spend and be spent for the brethren's sake, to do in a small way what Christ did for all, that is the Ideal of the Christian. Nothing so much aroused the contempt of opponents, and nothing so much contributed to the ultimate success of Christianity, as this altruistic Ideal with its religious basis. The Empire could not

[1] Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person*, p. 160.
[2] Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, vol. i, App. III.
[3] Almost unconscious.

stand against it; reformed Paganism wilted before it. It was therefore unreasonable to suppose that a few solitary mystics, albeit in possession of much spiritual beauty, could withstand the Power of the Cross.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ARIAN CONTROVERSY

A BRIEF glance at the period of the great Arian controversy is perhaps necessary to illustrate once again the action and reaction of Vital Force and the Graecized elements upon which it operated. What happened in the intervening period is most important from historical and theological points of view. But this is neither a formal history nor a theological treatise; it is the study of a human condition which is changed by contact with a force from outside itself. Some would say that this change was produced by a sort of reformed Judaism acting upon its Hellenized environment. I think, however, that the phenomena which have been examined tend to prove that this is a superficial view, and that it hardly accounts for the fact, namely, a marvellous change in the thought, attitude, character, and energy of individuals and communities, a transformation which affects not only themselves, but to a marked extent the thought and life of society as a whole. Gnosticism vaguely allied, Neoplatonism as a rival system, were indebted to Christianity for their best characteristics, and ultimately failed because they lacked the distinctive element of the latter, the Historic Christ.

'The Monarchian controversies of the third century on the Trinity and the supreme divinity of Christ were but preludes to the great pitched battle of the Arian contro-

versy in the fourth.'[1] For our purpose, then, attention can be concentrated upon that, and that alone. The orthodox theology of the Nicene period is extremely unpopular in some quarters where admiration of 'the simple New Testament Faith' is maintained as if there was a strong antithesis between them. As a matter of fact the orthodox theology of the fourth century is nothing more than the expression of that faith in terms which were hammered out in a controversy forced upon the Church. It is, of course, expressed according to the genius of those taking part in it. The Church was predominantly Greek, even at this late age, and not only was the Greek element superior in numbers, but also in intellectual power. But instead of lamenting this as if we wished the guardianship of the Faith to be in the hands of fools, we should be profoundly thankful that there were men of deep intellectual insight, as well as of earnest conviction, to interpret the rule of faith, the tradition of Apostolic doctrine, and to perceive the consequences of the interpretation which a strong and vigorous group attempted to place upon it. It is also uncritical to charge the Nicene Fathers with 'over-definition' and with the employment of philosophical and abstract language. Indeed the controversial writings of the time abound with such, and in this respect the Arian partisans are equally at fault with their antagonists, if we are to judge by the fragments of literature which survive. But the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed is singularly free from either of these defects. It is a succinct statement of verities and facts with an economy of verbiage and a restraint in definition of insoluble Mysteries. The only word used in a strictly philosophical sense is 'substance',[2] and that was forced upon the Catholic party because it admitted, to the Greek mind at least, no ambiguity. The

[1] Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, p. 105.

[2] *οὐσία* and the adj. comp. *ομοούσιος*, *ογ*.

Confession of Faith, 'commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius', is the one Symbol which revels in definition, and that was a construction of the Western Church.[1] Whatever philosophical thought was behind the (so-called) Nicene formulary, it is markedly absent from the Creed itself, which represents in language, stately and impressive from its very brevity, the traditional belief of the Church.

Apart from all adventitious aids, the strength of the Arian system was its transcendent monotheism, that is, on its speculative side. God is perfect, infinite, one and unbegotten. Nothing can disturb the unity of God any more than it can disturb His perfection or His infinity. Therefore the Son is not of the Essence of the Father but His first Creation. He is not truly God.[2] He had a beginning. 'There is indeed a Logos immanent in God, but it is not the Son, and the Son, like all other creaturely beings, participates in this inherent Logos, and is Himself named Logos only by way of grace.'[3] All this appealed to the flood of semi-Pagans who after Constantine's successes poured into the Church. For centuries Greeks had been seeking a unity and they would find it, so it seemed, in this bald monotheism which had a Platonic flavour of transcendence, and the pseudo-Logos doctrine would attract those who liked a touch of Stoicism in their cosmology. Harnack, who has a keen eye for Hellenism, objects to Arian doctrine very strongly. In a fine passage, of which I supply the closing sentences, he gives no uncertain sound: 'The opponents (of Arianism) were right; this doctrine leads right back to heathenism. The orthodox

[1] Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i, pp. 35–42. The *Quicunque Vult* is rather an exposition of faith than a creed in the strict sense.

[2] The following are two Arian declarations: *ξένος τοῦ υἱοῦ κατ' οὐσίαν ὁ πατήρ. ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γένηται.*

[3] See Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person*, p. 177.

doctrine has, on the contrary, its abiding worth in the upholding of the faith that in Christ God Himself has redeemed man, and led him into His fellowship. This conviction of faith was saved by Athanasius against a doctrine which did not understand the inner nature of religion generally, which sought in religion only teaching, and ultimately found its satisfaction in an empty dialectic.' [1] He sees, what casual observers do not see, that Christianity itself was at stake. Even Carlyle repeated the familiar gibe of Gibbon that the controversy was one about a diphthong,[2] but on looking deeper into the subject, confessed that it was truly a life-and-death struggle for the religion of Christ, and that, if Arianism had won, the Apostolic faith would have dwindled into a legend.[3]

For it was only a speculative monotheism. On the speculative side it robbed the Faith of the Deity of Christ,[4] but on the religious and practical side it opened the gates to polytheism. The leaders of the movement tell their followers that the Son of God is not truly God, but they may call Him so and worship Him as such. 'Even if He be styled God, yet He is not true God, but only by the participation of grace, even as all others.' [5] Here in one sentence is the denial of the essential Deity of Christ, and yet permission to think of Him as God. If the orthodox faith had not crushed this heresy it would ultimately have perished through its own insincerity and self-contradiction. 'It was a mass of presumptuous theorizing, supported by alternate scraps of obsolete traditionalism, and uncritical

[1] *History of Dogma*, vol. iv, p. 41.

[2] *Decline and Fall*, cap. xxi. Constantine also, at least in its earlier phases, thought the point at issue was unimportant, and the dispute 'purely verbal'. Bright, *Age of the Councils*, vol. i, p. 78.

[3] Quoted by Bright, *Age of the Councils*, vol. i, p. 75.

[4] On this side it is a reversion to Jewish Deism.

[5] Cf. *Thalia*, a collection of songs 'for sailors, millers, and wayfarers' (Athan. *Or. c. Arianos*, i. 5).

text-mongering.'[1] That it lived so long and resisted orthodoxy so tenaciously is *prima facie* a matter for wonder. It is, however, well to remember (1) that it held very much in common with the Catholic Faith; (2) that it seemed a safeguard against the horrors of Sabellianism, from a struggle with which the Church was just now painfully emerging; (3) that it would appeal to those who craved in their thought a philosophical unity and yet did not wish to expend much reflection upon it; (4) that the worship of Christ as demi-god was congenial to many who had only partially divested themselves of Paganism. As regards this last, it is easy to see how the way lies open to polytheism. A speculative monotheism may easily go hand in hand with a recognition of 'Lords many and Gods many'. The history of Greek philosophy illustrates this fact. Neoplatonism was extremely tolerant of polytheism, and the revival of Paganism under the Emperor Julian got its encouragement and acquired its most attractive elements from contemporary Neoplatonism. Depriving the pre-temporal Logos, and consequently the Christ, of essential Deity, the Arian made it logically possible, and almost inevitable, that other 'creatures' would be worshipped also, *honoris causa*, as the Son was worshipped.[2] Why not? If the Son was to be worshipped in an honorific way the principle of such adoration is established, and the old Pantheon with the All-Father Zeus,[3] as the source and fountain of deific honours, might as well come back again.

[1] Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, p. 274.

[2] Arianism survived among semi-barbarous Teutonic tribes long after its exorcism from civilization. Its missionary successes are much to its credit, but may perhaps be explained by the surface simplicity of its teaching. To perceive its unreasonableness required secular, as to perceive its impiety required spiritual, culture. Moral decadence marked the acceptance of Arianism by Christian Greeks; moral elevation distinguished barbarian conversion to Arianism, because it was a step upward.

[3] Or Odin.

Demi-gods and heroes might flourish as in times of old. This was 'secularization' with a vengeance, and it was against this that Athanasius and the Catholic party contended.

In reading the history of the period one comes to the conclusion that with all its speciousness Arianism was not generally popular.[1] Instinctively the simple Christian felt that he was being robbed of what was vital to his religion. The strength of Arianism was with the civil authority, the courtiers, and the court bishops, and the influx of partially converted heathen, but the heart of Christendom was sound. Already I have noted that Clement of Alexandria, though substantially Christian, was Greek in his thought; Origen presents a further stage in the influence of Christ's religion—he was still Greek in thought, but the assimilation is more advanced. Athanasius is an illustration of what the Vital Force of Christianity can do in transforming thought and character. He manifests the Hellenic love of metaphysics, the speculative power with the subtlety and ingenuity of his race, but he is wholly Christian. Philosophy was for him secondary to theology, and theology was of supreme importance because it safeguarded religion. His life spent in the service of religious truth, his brave opposition to heresy in the face of heavy odds, the persecutions and the exiles which he cheerfully endured, his almost uniformly gentle and charitable demeanour towards those who differed from him, or who treated him cruelly and unjustly, constitute a wonderful witness to the Power of Christ. His whole life was a confessorship. His greatness and gentleness of soul exhibit the influence of Our Lord upon one who was a typical product of the Hellenized East. His doctrine was thoroughly Evangelical. 'Only God can unite us with God . . . a true incarnation is needed in order to redemption. Only the

[1] Art. 'Arianism', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. i, p. 777.

Divine Son could atone for the sins of the world.' [1] Harnack says in the course of a long, critical, but generally appreciative, review of this Father and his doctrines: 'The theology and Christology of Athanasius are rooted in the thought of Redemption.' [2] And yet 'Athanasius always appealed to the collective testimony of the Church to support the doctrine which he defended'.[3] He realized that he was introducing no innovation, but championing the faith once delivered to 'the saints', and held continuously in an unbroken tradition from the days of the Apostles to his own. Of course he fought his battle in an atmosphere surcharged with Hellenized thought, which he himself breathed, and which was natural to him. He fought with the weapons of his race and country.[4] The Christian faith had neither annihilated his character nor its instincts; it had transformed and consecrated them. The form was Greek, but the essence was Christian. How strong the hold was which the Catholic Faith had acquired upon the mind and spirit of the Eastern world is illustrated by the fact that the end of the fourth century saw the pseudo-Christianity of Arius roll away in ignominious defeat towards the confines of Graeco-Roman civilization, where semi-barbarous Teutons were too simple to see its irrationality, and too unspeculative to understand its bad theology.

'So too every system of science or theology must likewise perish which presumes like Arianism to discover from the feeble brain of man a law to circumscribe the revelation of our Father's love in Christ.' [5]

This brief review of the great fourth-century conflict in which Hellenized forces within the Church strove to change the substance of the Christian Faith—and strove in vain—appropriately brings this section to a close.

[1] See Orr, *Progress of Dogma*, p. 112.
[2] *Hist. of Dogma*, vol. iv, p. 26. [3] Ib., p. 45.
[4] Hellenized Egypt. [5] Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, p. 274.

PART III

THE THIRD MEASURE: THE ROMAN

CHAPTER I

A PAGAN THEOCRACY

Any one who reads ten consecutive chapters of Livy's historical masterpiece must be struck by the religiosity of the people of Ancient Rome. The sources of Roman belief and practice are not by any means clear. There was probably (1) a native element which the little State on the banks of the Tiber held in common with the other peoples of Latium, but with local differentiation. There was (2) a large Etruscan element, and it is very difficult at this stage of archaeological knowledge to say how large, and how deep, it was. Certainly, divination, augury, and a considerable amount of the State ceremonial was derived from Etruria.[1] The last three kings of Rome were of Etruscan origin, and if any reliance is to be placed upon the statements of later writers, Servius Tullius occupied himself much with State affairs, and in touching them he could not, for reasons which will be disclosed later, help affecting religion. And finally, (3) during the historic period and probably to some degree before,[2] these two Italian elements were influenced, first, by contact with the

[1] 'Gens . . . ante omnes alias eo magis dedita religionibus, quod excelleret arte colendi eas' (Livy, v. 1, 6; discussing the Etruscans).

[2] The Etruscan religion has many affinities with Greek worship, modified by Tuscan sombreness. Cf. Mozley, *Divine Aspect of History*, vol. i, p. 192.

colonies of Magna Graecia, and, secondly, by the large contact with Greek life which developed after the Punic Wars, and was made permanent by the conquest of the Eastern Mediterranean. The Hellenic influence was disintegrating, but for many centuries did not perhaps affect materially the simple *pietas* of Italian peasants. It did, however, spread religious confusion among the townsfolk, and with the assistance of Greek philosophy encouraged scepticism in the governing classes. That the degeneration was marked we gather, not merely from the attitude of reactionaries like Cato, and the attempts of literary men like Cicero, Vergil, Livy, and, in a less obvious way, Horace, to impress upon their contemporaries the sacredness of Roman origin and history, but in the official reformation and revival of religion under Augustus.

The primitive Roman was surrounded by *numina*, and his religion was more daemonistic than polytheistic.[1] Vesta was the spirit of the fire on the hearth. The Penates were the spirits associated with the storehouse of the home, and on necessity could be moved, and should be moved, as Aeneas carried his family deities from Troy to Italy. The Lares were connected in a way which is still obscure with ancestor-worship, and also with the land. Every house had its *lar familiaris*, who was the tutelary spirit of the family, and who, treated with proper reverence and respect, would prevent its dying out.[2] Also at cross-roads it was common to see chapels erected in which were images in honour of *lares compitales*, the tutelary deities, I suppose, of community life and settlement, since roads were vital to intercourse. The Genius was the mysterious generative power of the family, regarded as its tutelary

[1] Art. 'Roman Religion', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x, p. 823.

[2] *Dict. of Classical Antiq.*, pp. 343–4; and for a rather divergent account, 'Rom. Rel.', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x, p. 845.

spirit which maintained its continuity, and belonged to the individual for his lifetime only, determined his character, influenced his career for good, and on his death passed on to his successor as representative of the family. Worship and religious ceremony were associated with all these intimate elements of domestic life, and the well-being of the family depended upon the *sacra privata* being duly (*rite*) observed.[1]

The national religion was originally nothing more than the development of the family rites into a wider sphere. As were the individuals to the family, so were the families to the State. The *paganalia* and the *compitalia* are evidences of community worship; and the cult of Vesta, an essential element in the State religion, as in family worship, shows the close relation between the two. Naturally the State looked for religious sanction and religious material to the units of which it was composed, and applied what it found, and what was appropriate, to the common life. To guard against misconception it may be well to say that this was an instinctive, not a conscious, or deliberate, process. The Latin did not think out his religion; he felt it, and then acted. The *res publica* was the full and natural development of the *res privata*; therefore *sacra publica* were as essential as the *sacra privata*: if ceremonies were fitting in the one case, they were fitting in the other. Such a conception as modern civilization has evolved of a State apart from, and indifferent to, religion was totally foreign to the Latin mind. Religion was of the very texture of public as of family life, so that the Roman Respublica may be regarded as a Pagan theocracy. Etruscan influence would seem to have strengthened this characteristic, while Hellenic importations tended to destroy it, and the Mystery-religions were alien and hostile to it. Fortunately, these later influences did not make themselves markedly felt,

[1] Bigg, *Church's Task under the Roman Empire*, pp. 34–9.

until Rome had reached a point where her mission to the world could not be seriously affected by this religious disintegration.

To the Roman, therefore, religion was a matter of corporate rather than of personal significance. It cannot be said that the individual aspect was absent, but it was secondary. The family, and, later on, the State were the supreme considerations. To maintain the proper relations with the *numina* of both, or, if there had been offence, to restore such relationship, was the first care of the head of the family, and of the civil authorities. Many of the most characteristic Latin words and phrases illustrate this. *Pietas* (*pius*) combines the idea of due performance of service to gods and ancestors, with that of the sacrifice of self to the interests of the community; *virtus* is not originally virtue, or even valour, in a personal sense, but manhood—the quality which enables a man to perform his duty to family and State, and in the first place had, I suspect, a purely physical and sexual meaning. *Fas* and *ius*, usually distinguished as divine and human law, were not opposed to, or separate from, one another; the former represented the divine origin and sacred obligation of religious law; the latter, what was established by public authority or custom. Since family and civil life were under the care and tutelage of the gods, authority and custom possessed religious sanction. There was more than mere conservatism in the respect paid to *mores maiorum*. Cicero was approximately correct when he said: 'It is in piety and religious duty and in this single piece of wisdom, that we have understood all things to be ruled and governed by the will of the immortal gods, this it is in which we have surpassed all races and all nations.'[1] Naturally the Hebrew race was overlooked in this hasty generalization, for in the great orator's time

[1] *de Harusp. resp.*, 19.

the Jews were barely distinguished in the Roman mind from other Oriental peoples, though within the lapse of a generation they were widely, but not accurately, known to the inhabitants of Italy. With this exception the statement of Cicero may be accepted as true.

Indeed the parallel between the Hebrew and the Roman which the above quotation has suggested is sufficiently striking. The underlying idea in both cases was theocratic. Religion and patriotism were blended together. The Mosaic Law possessed divine authority, and Roman Law had 'fundamental obligations, the *fas*, and *ius*, which lies in the background of the state, and which the people themselves dare not infringe'.[1] In each case ethics would seem to have developed out of religion, and produced characters of a stern but elevated morality. The austerity more marked among the Romans; the elevation more marked among the Hebrews. Here I think the parallel ceases, and points of contrast begin to appear.

The Roman was generously polytheistic; the Hebrew developed from Henotheism to the strictest and most fervent Monotheism. Patriotism became the supreme passion of the Roman, and his religion was absorbed in it; the reverse process took place with the Hebrew, and under the teaching of the prophets, synchronizing as much of it did with national misfortune and final disaster, religion developed after a manner unique in pre-Christian times. Roman law rarely rose above the external and the conventional; the Mosaic Law was essentially spiritual, though this aspect of it tended to be obscured. Roman ethics was an external thing, a sort of moral policeman, until it was deepened and intensified by Stoicism; Hebrew morality, according to its prophetic interpreters, was a matter of right relation to a pure and righteous Being. The citation of these points of dissimilarity will suffice to

[1] Greenidge, *Rom. Pub. Life*, pp. 238–9.

show that the parallel between the two religions is extremely limited.

Of a truth, it is impossible to invest the worship of Janus or Minerva with any profound moral meaning. In the worship of Jupiter Optimus Maximus [1]—practically identical with the Greek Zeus, but coming under Etruscan influence [2]—the Romans of all classes had an object of worship which relegated to the background the cults of the patrician families, and united them in devotion to a deity who could adequately represent the State, and under whose aegis it might advance to the subjugation of the world. In the religious or quasi-religious reflections and references of the historian Livy—and they are many—there is the suggestion of an underlying monotheism, a hazy conception of a universal moral government. That celestial providence favoured the Romans was a matter not so much of pious opinion as of the facts of history. Had not the Roman State risen from dubious and obscure beginnings to be mistress of all the nations? How had this proud eminence been reached but by the assistance of the gods? And especially of the 'Best and Greatest'? [3] His greatest coadjutor in the career of national aggrandizement was Mars,[4] the characteristic deity of this virile people, involved with legends of the foundation of the great city. Livy appropriately demands: 'si cui populo licere oportet consecrare origines suas et ad deos referre auctores, ea belli gloria est populo Romano, ut cum suum conditorisque sui parentem Martem potissimum ferat, tam et hoc gentes humanae patiantur aequo animo quam

[1] He shared the temple with Juno and Minerva, but had unquestioned precedence over them.

[2] 'Roman Religion', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x, p. 830.

[3] Jupiter.

[4] Chronologically his worship was anterior to that of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and was probably indigenous among Latin and Sabellian tribes.

imperium patiuntur.'[1] Cicero in his orations frequently appealed to the religious sentiment of his hearers, indicated their privileges, enlarged on their destiny as the favoured of the gods, and invoked their sense of obligation. Vergil, the religious poet of Pagan Rome, is at great pains to revive flagging faith in the divine origin and mission of the people who had in his day consolidated the sovereignty of East and West, and who were for the first time (unequivocally) represented by one ruler, Caesar Augustus.[2] The words he puts into the mouth of 'father Anchises', though oft repeated, I cannot refrain from quoting, so apposite are they to the subject in hand:

> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
> Hae tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos.[3]

To Vergil 'history was a revelation; and by a not dishonourable mistake, he thought that the imperial power of Rome was itself the magic spell which should call into life a reign of everlasting peace over the whole earth'.[4] It is in this spirit that the Fourth Eclogue was written, a poem which has almost a Messianic ring. Indeed in the Middle Ages Vergil was regarded by some as inspired after the manner of the Hebrew prophets,[5] though not in the same degree, and the Fourth Eclogue was a great favourite with the Schoolmen.

[1] Livy, Bk. I, preface.
[2] Octavius, nephew and heir of Julius.
[3] *Aeneid*, vi. 851–3.
[4] Mozley, *Divine Aspect of History*, vol. i, p. 212.
[5] Note also Dante's reverent treatment of him.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS DECADENCE AND RECONSTRUCTION

But this greatest of Roman poets was concerned, like his Imperial master, in the reconstruction of religion. He wished the Golden Age of simple faith and sturdy, home-like morals to return, and in the revival inaugurated by Augustus he hoped to see (and I think he at least was sincere) the ancient piety and virtue of the Roman people come back again. From the period of the second war with Carthage to the time of Augustus a gradual degeneration had been going on. Up to that time the foreign elements had been absorbed by, and had enriched, the old beliefs. When, however, the gates of the world were thrown open, the gods of Hellas took the place of, or were identified with, the old Italian deities. Syncretism got speedily to work. The indigenous gods ' of shadowy personality, with no poetry or legend to invest them with human interest, melted into one another, or into forms of alien mythology '.[1] Towards the end of the period Oriental cults with their peculiar personal appeal made their appearance and rapidly became popular. And while the importation of foreign gods and of new mysterious rites was destroying the form, philosophy, also a foreign importation, was undermining the substance of the early religion. No doubt the *laudatores temporis acti* idealized the early history of their people, but they were certainly right in ascribing to their ancestors courage, fidelity, and patriotism. There was probably united to this a comparative simplicity and purity in domestic relations, and the whole fabric of primitive society was bound together by an anxious care

[1] Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Aurelius*, p. 530.

of, and sedulous attention to, the worship of the gods of home and State. The Greek was always more or less inclined to treat his gods, if not with levity, at least in a spirit of *camaraderie*, but when the Latin began to mock and jest like the lyric poets of the late Republic and the Augustan Age, or to treat of the gods either with resentment like the philosophic poet Lucretius, or to debate in a spirit of cold scepticism like Cicero and his friends, something was seriously amiss. The decadence of the old faith had marched with a decline in family and civic virtue, so observers said. Men had less sense of moral responsibility, less disinterestedness in the service of the Republic; the noble Roman matron was a disappearing species, divorce was popular, families were growing smaller,[1] and a general licentiousness was abroad. What was the cause of this decline? Was it not directly traceable to the decay of religion? Augustus and his circle believed that it was; and though there were other causes, or a complex of causes at work, it is not reasonable to question the general soundness of their diagnosis.

The remedy which the Emperor applied was agreeable to his own temperament and to the genius of the Roman people. 'It may well have been that after the terrible orgies of civil strife through which the Roman world had passed, Augustus was the convinced representative of a repentant wish to return to the old paths. The Roman character . . . was an enduring type. And Augustus, if he may have indulged in impious revels in his youth,[2] . . . had two great characteristics of the old Roman mind, formalism and superstition.'[3] So he re-established, and succeeded to a considerable degree in popularizing, the old

[1] 'Augustus in vain offered considerable advantages to a father of three children, showing that this number in a family was rare' (Angus, *Environment of Christianity*, p. 47).

[2] Suetonius, *Octavius*, cap. lxx. [3] Dill, *Rom. Society*, p. 532.

State religion. This revival had a double appeal, for I think it has already been shown that religion and patriotism were inextricably interwoven. The worship of the old Latin deities had nothing exclusive about it; the gods of other races were recognized and reverenced. But Augustus re-established the divinities of ancient Rome in their rightful place. He restored temples like those of Jupiter Feretrius and Juno Sospita, and influenced wealthy friends to do the like service for other national objects of veneration. He burnt numbers of spurious books on augury, and only retained the Sibylline Oracles.[1] He revived the various sacerdotal offices which had fallen into desuetude, and through his occupancy of the chief pontificate [2] he exercised direct control over the whole area of religious observance. His antagonism to alien religions, like the cult of Isis, was due not to intolerance, but to political sagacity. He observed that these exotic worships had a distracting and unsettling effect upon the people, and therefore tried to get rid of them.

The efforts of the Emperor, his serious-minded friends, and those who in order assumed the purple, enjoyed an unique success. Most restorations of the sort are doomed from the first because of their artificiality and because they supply no real need. The elaborate attempt of the Emperor Julian to restore Paganism comes into one's mind by way of contrast. But the revival of Augustus appealed in every way to the practical, formal, and precise Latin mind. It is very likely that the religious sentiment behind the movement was rather thin. I should be inclined to suspect the deep convictions of every one but Vergil, whose poetic soul was fired by the glory of Roman

[1] Dill, *Rom. Society*, p. 533.

[2] Pontifex Maximus, a title and office succeeding Emperors occupied with scrupulous care, whatever their personal character might be.

arms and conquest, by the beauty of Italian landscapes, by the charm of Italian life and manners. It was easy for him to fill with sacred significance the land he loved so well; re-people it with the old rustic gods, and see the Divine in everything. So far as he was a philosopher his thoughts ran in a Stoic channel, both in his admiration of the manly, simple, and heroic virtues, and in his conception of the origin and maintenance of the Universe.[1] Whether by the deeper spirit of Vergil, or by the practical wisdom of Augustus, Maecenas, and the rest, a responsive chord was struck in the heart of Roman citizens, and an almost equally disinterested service was rendered, up to the period of the Gothic invasions, to the *imperium Romanum* as in the purer Republic times was rendered to *Senatus populusque Romanus*.

Just as the chaos and confusion of the Civil Wars filled public-spirited Romans with horror and disgust, so the confusion and disorder into which sacred rites had fallen shocked their sense of decency and propriety. Thus the restoration appealed to the orderliness of the Latin mind, to its fondness for outward pomp and dignity, to an instinct for ritual exactitude. In fact it appealed to all those instincts and qualities which made the Roman so capable and efficient an administrator. Religion was a function of the State, a duty it discharged to its guardian deities. State officials presided over it, and woe to them if the *caerimonia* were not discharged with precision! External correctness was required by the gods. The Roman world had suffered years of fratricidal strife, and pious minds referred the disasters to the neglect of the tutelary deities and the substitution of foreign rites. The gods were angry. Let them be appeased! Consequently the revival of the ancient rites answered the craving of the popular conscience.

[1] *Georgics*, iv. 22 ff.

These reasons perhaps account for the success of the restoration; they do not alone ensure its permanence. Probably the Emperor-cult assisted to this end.[1] Julius Caesar's assassination and the appearance of a comet secured him divine honours. Mark Antony posed as Dionysus; Octavius was hailed as 'Son of the Divine',[2] but with wise moderation dispensed with celestial honours and was content with the title, *Augustus*. Caligula was very jealous of his divine prerogatives. Nero wore the radiated crown which symbolized his descent from the Sun-God. So the process of deification went on, and the chief extravagances were in the East. The motive of this imperial cult was a politico-religious one, the idea obviously being to give to the Empire as a whole a religious sanction, which the Roman gods gave to it in Italy and Italianized Provinces. It was a symbol which the Oriental mind especially could appreciate, while the religion of Numa would leave it bewildered or cold.[3] But it doubtless helped to confirm the latter, since this Emperor-worship might easily be regarded as an inevitable development from it, and it conveniently represented the sacrosanct majesty of the Empire from the Euphrates to Britain.

Stoicism also helped to render the ancestral faith permanent. I have had occasion before now to mention the affinity, on its moral side, of the Stoic system to the Hebrew temperament. This native attraction is even more conspicuous, though not so radical, between the Stoic ethics and the Roman. The high-minded Roman was a natural

[1] Deification of Emperors can be regarded as a 'Revival', using Tylor's term, of primitive ideas of the Divine King—see Frazer, *Golden Bough*. This is a view very largely accepted by students of Comparative Religion.

[2] He could not, or was unwilling to, discourage personal compliments of this type, e. g. Horace, *Carm.* iii. 5. 2: 'Praesens divus habebitur Augustus.'

[3] Bigg, *Church's Task*, pp. 36–7.

Stoic. Moreover, this ethical attraction was reinforced by the accommodating character of the Republican faith. It lent itself with equal readiness to polytheistic or pantheistic interpretation. These objects of civic worship were but manifestations of the Divine Will which was the Generative Reason [1] of the Universe. However much the Stoics of the Early Empire dissented from the despotism of the Emperors, they sympathized with their care for religion,[2] and in the course of time, as the hope of a return to constitutional freedom slipped from them, they were willing to render noble service to the Empire in administrative posts. Epictetus declares that 'as to piety about the gods, the chief thing is to have right opinions about them . . . to make libations and to sacrifice according to the custom of our fathers, purely and not meanly, nor carelessly, nor scantily, nor above our ability, is a thing which belongs to all to do.' [3] Clearly he viewed these observances as public duties. At last the grandest Stoic of them all attained the purple, yet Marcus Aurelius devoutly observed and practised the Latin rites. It was for him, doubtless, an external thing, and he did his conscience no violence. For all Romans 'religion was inseparable from patriotism',[4] and in the mind of the world-Emperor—for that is what he was to all intents and purposes—the worship of the gods was the symbol of that humanity which was the object of his beneficent care. Everything which linked men more closely together was to be jealously preserved, and chief among them was the religious ritual which all people united to observe, except the obstinate Jew and the fanatical Christian.[5]

[1] *σπερματικὸς λόγος.*

[2] Attalus, Seneca's teacher, was deeply interested in soothsaying (Glover, *Conflict of Religions*, p. 45).

[3] Id., ib., p. 70.

[4] Dill, *Rom. Society*, p. 545.

[5] His persecution of Christians is quite in character and, from his point of view, an unpleasant duty.

Generally speaking, the Latin race had no taste for abstract thought; no spiritual elevation. His relation to the gods was external; they expected certain things of him, and he was willing to offer them—no more and no less. There was no large-hearted generosity on the worshipper's side, but a punctilious correctness. This developed a care and thoroughness in execution which was easily transferred to matters not so closely associated with religion, though indeed an ancient Roman would find it hard to withdraw entirely from the circle of religious obligation. The only philosophy which made a wide appeal to educated Romans was Stoicism, and its attraction was that it laid stress on conduct, on action; not on mental gymnastics and spiritual states. They had an almost superstitious respect for forms and formulae. They did not seek vision or ideas; they sought for law and precedent. For them Order was indeed Heaven's first law. They could not create, but they could construct. Give them material of any kind and they would immediately organize it. Their religion was institutional; their State was slowly built up, precedent upon precedent. It was this quality or well-knit complex of qualities which made them fit to rule the world. They controlled by their powers of government, and administration, races who were their superiors not only in numbers, but in intellectual brilliance and spiritual insight. While the Hebrew had the Truth revealed to him and was carefully treasuring it till the Kingdom of Heaven should come; while the Greek was gathering intellectual material, and preparing a method of thought and seeking a metaphysical unity, the Roman was organizing the world, and building up the fabric of civilization.

CHAPTER III

PAX ROMANA

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the Roman Empire, its administration, its laws, and its moral and material effect upon the ancient congeries of races and peoples. As Dr. Bigg says: 'The whole world woke up to find itself one family.'[1] After the Roman standards, followed good roads, efficient civil service, sound legislation, just and impartial administration. Everything was marked with thoroughness, and everybody was treated alike. This, of course, is a broad generalization, but it is, I think, a true one. Of course there was a distinction drawn between a Roman citizen and the member of a subject race, between the servile and the free. But I think it can with truth be maintained that, allowing for distinctions of social status, there was a rough and ready justice in applying legislation and in judicial procedure. The Empire stood above national differences and racial religions. It interfered with them as little as possible, but above the varieties of worship, habits, and thoughts of the peoples of the Mediterranean Basin, there existed an organization in which they were all united, possessing a religious sanction which all could understand, and exerting itself for the general welfare. Moreover, 'Roman citizenship included an ever-growing proportion of the population in every land round the Mediterranean, till at last it embraced the whole Roman World'.[2] Thus, in increasing numbers, men of non-Italian blood became associated with the dignity, political wisdom, and beneficent administration of this Empire, were proud of the association, and were strongly disposed to maintain it.

[1] *Church's Task*, p. 37.
[2] Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 191.

The task of the Republic was to conquer. Religion and patriotism welded together made the Roman legions formidable. Combined with this double motive, and developed out of it, there was a spirit of order, discipline, and obedience. War shared with government the energies of the Roman citizen, and under the pressure of constant campaigns he evolved a military science which made him irresistible. With the exception of Caesar, I doubt if Rome produced a military genius of the first rank. High mediocrity marked the commanders; superb efficiency, the legionary. These qualities carried the standards of the Republic East and West. Brave but undisciplined peoples succumbed to them; brilliant individual opponents were worn out in long persistent campaigns. Consequently, when the Empire grew out of the Republic it inherited practically all that was permanent Roman territory. Very little was added afterwards; Dacia was won, but lost again. The Empire, as a whole, was well content to consolidate what the Republic had acquired, and in giving pause to the period of aggressive warfare earned the gratitude of mankind. The virtues which had subjugated the world were now devoted to government. In this strong framework of law and order men could cultivate the arts of peace; could think and act. Under a centralized authority they learned to know one another, they lost their provincialism, they traded with one another not only in material, but in spiritual and intellectual wares.[1] *Pacis Romanae maiestas* gave leisure and opportunity, under conditions hitherto unequalled, for the cultivation of the inner life. If there was anywhere spiritual power or vital force, it now had in the Roman Empire a containing vessel, a convenient framework, in which to operate. Moreover, the wonderful Imperial organization with its unifying principle, and its co-ordination of functions towards that

[1] Angus, *Environment of Christianity*, p. 105.

end, presented to thinking men a model of efficiency and sound government.

It is evident then that not only was there a spiritual and intellectual preparation in process, but a formal and external one. If the Hebrew presented the spiritual, the Hellene the intellectual, the Latin certainly supplied the corporeal elements, appropriately adjusted, to receive the leaven of the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA

As soon as the Christian society began to function, it did so according to the characteristics of its life. Even before the day of Pentecost there was present a principle of organization, implanted in the little band of disciples by the Lord Himself,[1] and acted upon by them in the selection of Matthias to fill the vacant place in the Apostolate.[2] It was not, however, until empowered by the Holy Spirit that there was any aggressive movement or anything even in the way of the simplest evolution of organization, and then the evolution took place not in an arbitrary or artificial manner, but *as it was needed.*

'From the first the disciples appear as a body amongst whom . . . twelve are held to possess ministerial office and commission [3] direct from Christ. Upon the whole body, thus differentiated into ministers and people, the Holy Ghost descends and the Church begins her life as the Spirit-bearing body, with the Apostles for her authoritative teachers and for her centre of unity.'[4] The germ of all future development is here; it is in the Apostolate which

[1] Acts i. 2–3, 8.
[2] Ib., i. 21–6.
[3] Ib., i. 25: *διακονία καὶ ἀποστολή.*
[4] Ib., ii. 42; Gore, *Church and Ministry*, p. 234.

has received it from Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit it becomes active and assumes the form adapted to its environment. The form is of secondary importance.[1] The principle which is behind the form is the vital thing, and the principle is that the authority and power are from above. One can imagine something quite different from the Episcopate, or the threefold Ministry, as taking shape in conditions different from those in which the Church found itself. A variation from the normal type of ecclesiastical polity appears early, or is said to appear, in a very important Christian community, that of Alexandria,[2] which later on contributed the staunchest defender of the faith in the history of the Church. On the authority of Jerome we learn that 'from the days of St. Mark the Evangelist down to the Episcopates of Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters at Alexandria used always to appoint as bishop one chosen out of their number and placed upon the higher grade'.[3] This is taken to mean, though it does not necessarily mean it, that there was no fresh consecration, but that the candidate 'became bishop by virtue of his election by the other presbyters'.[4] If this be so, it is likely that the Alexandrian presbyters were ordained not only to the priesthood but as potential bishops; otherwise, the Alexandrian practice would have excited, not merely interest, but some animadversion among contemporary Christians. This, however, is not the case. No charges are laid against the Alexandrians of having violated Church order. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the principle of ecclesiastical authority and

[1] e. g. in the Pauline churches there seem to have been various offices which have since disappeared, or have become merged in what have survived.

[2] Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, p. 66.

[3] The view of Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

[4] For a careful and scholarly review of this special case, see Gore, *Church and Ministry*, pp. 122–30.

commission was respected in the metropolis of Egypt, and that whatever happened there was an accommodation of form to environment. In the Mediaeval period the Church assimilated its organization to the prevailing fashion of government. Bishops became great feudal lords. Nor is this more a departure from primitive forms than the organization of the Irish Church, which was monastic, and followed the clan system. Abbots and chieftains ruled side by side in the secular and spiritual spheres, or united functions in the same person. There was monastic government, but episcopal transmission of authority. The anomaly called forth the protests of such churchmen as Anselm and Bernard, but it does not appear to be more than an extreme case of accommodation of form to environment.[1] To-day ecclesiastical government is adapting itself to the democratic setting in which it so often operates, but this again is only an alteration of form, not of principles. At the present moment Russia is passing through a tragical experience, in which the whole fabric of its civilization is in the melting-pot.[2] The Church of Russia is the only feature of the old social order which seems likely to survive. It will divest itself of the old Erastian trappings of the days of Tsardom, but the scanty information which we receive from behind the Soviet curtain leads us to infer that, however much it adjusts itself to new conditions, it will retain the Apostolic principle of deriving its authority from above.

[1] Id., ib., p. 150, note. [2] A. D. 1922.

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCIPLE OF DEVOLUTION

THE foregoing reflections may assist us in our study of the problem of what is permanent and what is variable in the Church's organization; what belongs to the Vital Force, and what is part of the human element which is absorbed and employed. The appointment of an office of mercy illustrates this very aptly. It appears to me difficult, after careful study of the New Testament evidence, to avoid the conclusion that all authority, and the power to delegate it, resided in the Apostolate. Under pressure of need the Apostolate *devolved* itself of eleemosynary functions; the body of the disciples selected 'seven men of good report' whom the Apostles appointed and ordained to the performance of these functions. Their work is 'a ministry';[1] 'they served as a prototype of a class of officers who were soon forced into existence, and who have since been permanent in the Christian Churches.'[2]

The origin of the presbyterate is nowhere distinctly stated. There is a strong analogy to it in the elders of the Jewish synagogue, but the functions of the Christian presbyter are wider and more important than those of his unconverted brother. He is not merely an agent of discipline, but is in a position of authority and shares in the counsels of the Apostolate.[3] Further prerogatives and graces, probably inherent in the office, rapidly developed,[4] and the terms ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος are in the Pauline letters roughly equivalent. It is natural that in

[1] Acts vi. 1.

[2] Hatch, Bampton Lectures, *Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, p. 49.

[3] Acts xi. 30; xv. 2, 4, 6, 23; xvi. 4; and xxi. 18.

[4] Jas. v. 4; 1 Pet. v. 1–5.

these early days terminology should be loose. It becomes more definite as the organization unfolds and adapts itself to its field of operation. Its original Jewish home, and its later settlement in the Graeco-Roman world, had both their respective influences. But whatever it took out of either had a natural affinity to the organic life of the Christian society, was assimilated, and then employed by it. The presbyterate was an old name, but the thing it represented gained a richer content, and a new spirit, when taken over by the Church.[1] Although this order simply appears upon the stage of Apostolic history without reference to its original creation, the appointment by SS. Paul and Barnabas of elders 'in every church' with prayer, and fasting, and commendation to the Lord is suggestive of the general practice.[2] Nor is this suggestion anywhere contradicted. The Apostolate was the fountain of authority.

'In recent years scholars have come to realize that the class of apostles was a far more numerous one than had been supposed.'[3] St. Paul's claim to Apostleship was recognized by the original Twelve, and never officially contravened, though his epistles witness to a great deal of sullen, chiefly underhand, opposition to his authority, and of course to his policy, by Judaizers. St. Barnabas is in a lesser degree also recognized, and St. Paul vindicates his apostleship together with his own.[4] Both have received Apostolic honour in ecclesiastical commemorations. It is, however, difficult to stop here. The position of Apollos in the Apostolic Church is enigmatical, unless he is to be recognized as an Apostle, though we have no means of knowing how and where he attained the office. St. Paul, indeed, places him in that category.[5] It involved either

[1] Gore, *Church and Ministry*, p. 241.
[2] Acts xiv. 23 in reference to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch.
[3] Purchas, *Johannine Problems*, p. 51.
[4] 1 Cor. ix. 6. [5] Ib., iv. 1–6.

appointment by Christ during His earthly ministry or a direct and unmistakable commission to preach the Gospel from the Ascended Lord, recognizable by the existing Apostolate.[1] The Johannine Epistles and the Apocalypse suggest at once an enlargement of the principle of recognition and a deterioration in quality of those possessing the office.[2] The *Didache* exemplifies its extreme degeneration, and marks its final disappearance.[3] No doubt these later stages represent the transition from the pioneering missionary condition of the Church to that of its localization.

This localization, however, was in vigorous process even in New Testament times. The preaching of the Gospel was ever followed by consolidation and organization. Local officers, teachers, prophets, evangelists were appointed to build up the material that had been created by Apostolic zeal and power. In the mother church of Jerusalem he who presided at the First Church Council was not strictly an Apostle. St. James, 'the Lord's brother', corresponded more definitely than any one else mentioned in the New Testament to our conception of a bishop. The Episcopal office, in what was the most important Christian community of that generation, was in existence, and developed its legitimate powers, under the eyes of the Apostolate. No doubt it suggested and provided a stimulus for similar localization elsewhere. The office of Timothy and Titus is not so clear. They seem to have been Apostolic delegates, exercising, as Lightfoot says, 'a movable episcopate'.[4] They received their commission from St. Paul, and they ordained men to the presbyterate and other offices.[5] If the great Apostle did this to provide for the maintenance and security of the Christian communities

[1] Gore, *Church and Ministry*, p. 214.

[2] Purchas, *Johannine Problems*, pp. 47–8, *re* Church at Ephesus; also Swete, *Apocalypse*, Introd.

[3] *Didache*, cap. xi.

[4] *Apos. Fathers*, Ign., i, p. 377.

[5] 1 Tim. v. 22; Titus i. 5.

during his absence, or in view of his death, it is reasonable to suppose that the intention was to carry on the succession at least in principle after these 'Apostolic delegates' [1] had passed away. There is no statement to this effect, perhaps because such a step would be the obvious one and, to the Apostolic mind, call for no definite declaration.

Far from my intention is it to investigate the whole subject of ecclesiastical organization in the Apostolic Age. There were other 'helps and governments'; some of which were ephemeral and passed away with the conditions which created them; others were absorbed in the functions of the Three Ministries which have survived and have become the normal organs of Church life. My object has been to show that in the Apostolic Age, and before either Hellenic or Latin influences could have had anything but the most superficial effect, the Church was organically unfolding itself. The Life, the Vital Force, was there; the Apostolate was the natural, the inevitable exponent of the Vital Force, and everything in the way of Church Order developed from it and expressed itself according to the state of Jewish life in the first place, and afterwards in conformity with the social life of Jewish-Greek and Hellenized communities of the Mediterranean Basin. Latin-Christian communities were a phenomenon of later generations.[2]

To begin with, this expression of Church Order, in so far as it was not native to the Church itself, was Hebraic. Moreover, this Hebraic element persisted long after Jewish Christians had ceased to be numerically or individually important. Just as the Hebraic spirit and tone survived, just as the Hebraic habit of thought, intellectual equipment, and literary tradition contended with Greek philosophy, so the form of the Apostolic principle in government, generated on Palestinian soil, lost nothing by subsequent

[1] A phrase used by Dr. Gore.

[2] e. g. the Church at Rome was long predominantly Greek.

contacts, but was rather enriched thereby. As the great Apostle of the Gentiles and his fellow workers began by using the synagogue until expelled therefrom, so afterwards the little Christian communities were organized to some extent on synagogue lines.[1] Later on Christian writers began to see analogies in the hierarchy and the worship of the Old Dispensation to the ecclesiastical order of the Christian Church.[2] The Baptismal rite was compared to Circumcision; the Eucharist, the characteristic worship of the Christian Ecclesia, had its anticipation in the sacrificial system of the Ancient Church. The Jewish hours of prayer and the Jewish practice of Psalms and Lections formed the basis of an elaborate cycle of devotion which was carried over into monastic life, and is a marked feature of Anglican observance. These hurried examples illustrate the power and tenacity of Hebraic custom in the Christian Church, and also reveal her indebtedness to it. For while Christianity gave new force and meaning to Hebraic materials, those materials under Divine Providence contributed strength and beauty to the Society which, among other things, was pledged to proclaim the God of Israel as the God of the whole earth.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH AN ORGANISM

When fascinated by the mighty contention of Church and Empire, or by the agitations of later heresies, it is well for us to remember not only the Vital Force which generated ecclesiastical polity, but the elements in the midst of which it first expressed itself, and from which it acquired much of the form of its institutions and a certain colour in its corporate life.

[1] Headlam, *Doctrine of the Church and Reunion*, p. 73.
[2] Cl. Rom. (already cited, Part II).

'If we recollect . . . that it was in the second century that the foundations of the whole of the ecclesiastical system prevailing up to the present day were laid, we can only be astonished at the greatness of the work which was then achieved.'[1] For my own part I could accept this generalization if it were permitted to substitute the phrase *by the end of the first* for the phrase *in the second*, in the above citation from Dr. Harnack's suggestive book of lectures on *What is Christianity?* I should, however, be still better satisfied if the illustration of a building as implied in the word *foundations* could be exchanged for some figure drawn from organic life. For to my mind the organization of the Christian Society is not something dead and formal, though dead matter may cling around it, but the outward expression and vehicle of its inner life. I would personally prefer to illustrate the growth of Christian institutions somewhat in this way—the seed implanted in Jewish soil evolved its essential character, if not before transplantation, at least immediately after transplantation, while it still possessed the care of the husbandmen who understood its original environment.[2] I realize that this view is seriously contravened, but I think the opposition to it is gradually disappearing as investigation of the Apostolic Age proceeds, and the situation is more distinctly visualized.

For instance, the powerful and scholarly Bampton Lectures of Dr. Hatch on *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, though it assumes an Apostolic background, does not give due weight to New Testament evidence. This was natural, because its writings were being seriously called in question and subjected to severe tests. Plausible but hasty and radical theories as to authorship, genuineness, and date were bandied to and

[1] Harnack, *What is Christianity?* (Eng. trans.), p. 200.
[2] St. Paul and his companions.

fro. It was unsafe for the historical student and thinker to build up an argument or hypothesis on what might prove insecure foundations. Consequently he gives a disproportionate share to the Graeco-Roman world in the shaping of Christian institutions, just as in another connexion he lays undue stress on Hellenic influences [1] in the moulding of Christian thought.

It is quite true that the formation of associations was a characteristic of Graeco-Roman life, but it has also been a feature of other social states. In fact it is the expression of one of the most persistent of human instincts. Hope and fear, worship and recreation, ambition and sympathy have always tended to unite men into guilds and societies. It was not a tendency peculiar to the Empire, although the conditions of life therein encouraged it. The new class of free workers and tradesmen, constantly recruited by manumission from the ranks of slavery, sought to give themselves power and dignity by forming themselves into *sodalitia* or *collegia*. Many of these guilds were religious in character—indeed their early origin was sacred [2]—and many were largely occupied with the proper conduct of funeral rites, and in the pious care of places of burial where the bodies of defunct members lay. But the Christian society was living on the brotherhood basis before its entrance into the Gentile world. The Book of the Acts shows this very plainly. The initiation, the imposition of hands, the common meal, the community of goods, the care of the dead, even of false brethren,[3] all illustrate the idea of a brotherhood. It is one of the features of the earliest life of the Church. And it was a brotherhood bound together by religion; it was nothing without it. Accordingly when Christianity went forth to conquer civilization for its Master it transplanted the brotherhood

[1] Hatch, *Influence of Greek Ideas* (a most suggestive book).
[2] Dill, *Rom. Society*, p. 254.
[3] Acts v. 6, 10.

idea from Palestine into the Gentile world, and that idea found itself in a soil prepared for it by the universal fondness for guilds and associations. These latter were largely quasi-religious and mutual-benefit societies. The Christian Church was purely religious and, as the fruit of its religion, cared for the poor and those in need. Thus there was an outward resemblance to the organizations which were so popular, especially among the lower classes. To the casual Pagan observer the Christian community in any city would seem to busy itself as a Benefit Club might do, and its officers might seem to be, above all things else, dispensers of charity. Yet the real truth was far otherwise. We have already seen that the chief officers of the Palestinian Church speedily relieved themselves of eleemosynary burdens, delegating such duties to an inferior order, that they might devote their whole time to prayer and the ministry of the Word.[1] Nor is there any reason to question that there was a similar gradation of office in Gentile Christian communities.[2] As the situation became more complex the duty of general supervision could hardly be avoided by the Apostolate, and would seem to be in line with its commission. Distinguished from the petty details of 'serving tables', it would be consonant with high spiritual office. Certainly St. Paul at a later period never sought to evade these tasks concerned with 'the care of all the Churches'.[3] When the Apostolate died out, these chief functions would be exercised by the localized leaders of the Church who derived their authority and commission from the Apostolate.

Confronted with the conditions of the Gentile world, the Church adapted itself speedily and naturally to its surroundings. The Christian community of the *Didache* is evidently governed by bishops (presbyters) and deacons.[4]

[1] Acts vi. 4.
[2] Headlam, *Doctrine of the Church*, p. 73.
[3] 2 Cor. xi. 28.
[4] *Did.*, c. xv.

Above them in rank, however, is a sort of itinerant order of prophets or 'apostles' whose character requires testing, because of frequent imposture, but who, having met the test successfully, are to be given honour and have the right to celebrate the Eucharist ὅσα θέλουσιν, and perform other functions so long as the local ministry is not disregarded. Whether or no these functions included ordination is not stated. The *Didache* is a manual of directions for the use of a local church, not a treatise on ecclesiastical organization. But in the New Testament writings, the local presbytery never seems to have acted alone in the matter of laying-on-of-hands, and these wandering officials of the *Didache* (when genuine) may, in the absence of contrary evidence, be fairly regarded as possessing like authority, and exercising like functions, to Timothy and Titus. The authority issued primarily from the Apostolate, and the functions, so far as defined, were established by it. If prophet (apostle) and local church were mutually acceptable, there was a tendency to make the connexion permanent. Thus a local Church would acquire, in a natural manner, but in accordance with the principle of Apostolic authority, all the elements necessary to the maintenance of its organic life. For obvious reasons, however, the evidence of the *Didache* on this matter is precarious.[1]

There is a temptation at this point to pursue the fascinating but elusive subject which is occupying the learning and thought of so many minds in our present age, that of Church order. Along the lines of the principle which I am trying to work out, I believe there is much to be gathered that would be directly conducive to a solution of the problem. Let it suffice for me to say that it seems unscientific [2] to accept the doctrine of the action of the Vital Force upon the spirit and mind of Christians, and to deny

[1] Gore, *Church and Ministry*, pp. 253–61.
[2] Also unscriptural.

its action upon the corporate life of the Church. Equally unsound, in my view at least, is the assumption that ecclesiastical order sprang, like Athene from the mind of Zeus, and could henceforth receive no modification, and remained unaffected by the environment in which it found itself. The Vital Force impelled and guided the Body as it did the Mind and Spirit of the Church, but in regard to none of the three did it override the human factors, or fail to use them according to their nature to the fulfilment of the Divine Purpose. A woman took and hid leaven in the third measure of meal till the whole was leavened. There is the illustration. The process is still going on. The leaven is absorbing, transmuting, assimilating on the corporate level, as it did on the intellectual and spiritual levels.

Some distinguished scholars, most of them of the past generation, but whose influence can still be felt, seem to eliminate the Vital Force factor when investigating the subject of ecclesiastical institutions. They even disparage the Jewish factor and give exaggerated importance to the forces which existed in Graeco-Roman civilization. It is well to recognize the potency of the latter, but since the vindication of the historical value of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, the conclusion is being gradually reached that in Palestine the main features of organic life were not only in existence but in effective operation. The transplantation to Gentile soil was made naturally and gradually. Whatever controversy St. Paul had with Judaizers, it was not on the question of organization. All his efforts, and most of what he endured, were expended and borne to preserve the unity and continuity of his work with that of the elder Apostles. He valued the gifts made by Corinthians and the churches of Macedonia to ' the saints ' in distress and need in Jerusalem,[1] among other reasons,

[1] Rom. xv. 26 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 1–3 ; 2 Cor. ix. 1.

because it witnessed to such unity. Offices and functions multiplied among Gentile communities, but there is not the slightest hint that there was a departure from the principle, or even the framework, of the Palestinian order.

CHAPTER VII

THE EPISCOPATE

It was necessary for the Christian communities to have some officer who could represent them in their mutual relations, and also in their relations to the secular life around them. The class of officials, whose designation in the earliest times is never very clear, but which seems to possess a measure of authority derived from the Apostolate, and of higher rank than local presbyters and deacons, gradually became localized itself. This would happen possibly in many cases. On the other hand we cannot lightly dismiss the testimony of Clement of Alexandria, who describes St. John in his last days as going about the districts adjacent to Ephesus, establishing bishops and organizing whole churches.[1] The term 'bishop' is employed here in the sense which is familiar to us. But however they received their authority, whether directly or indirectly from the Apostolate, these bishops became recognized as the leaders of their own local congregations, and the medium of communication between the local church and Christian communities at a distance. To the disciple of Christ in the first centuries the separative conditions and the spirit which accompanies it, to which we have grown unhappily accustomed, were entirely alien. The Church was one, whether in Syria, Ephesus, or Rome.

The letters of Ignatius, now regarded as having been

[1] *Quis dives salvetur*, 42; quoted by Gore, *Church and Ministry*, p. 262.

written about A. D. 110, that is, about eighty years after the birth of the Christian Church at Pentecost, prove that the Episcopate, in all essentials as it is known to-day, existed in Syria, Asia Minor, and Rome.[1] Indeed the Syrian martyr affirms that there are bishops settled in the farthest parts of the earth.[2] It is difficult to gainsay such evidence, but what is germane to my purpose is that the Vital Force carried over, from Hebraic conditions to the broader life of the Ancient World, certain permanent elements which began to develop, and develop rapidly, in a congenial atmosphere, and in a soil prepared for its reception, towards an organic form which still persists in four-fifths of Christendom. It is possible to say that this was accidental, but the hypothesis of accident is old-fashioned alike in the spheres of physics, history, and philosophy. But I am again yielding to temptation! As I have said before, the likeness of organization between the Pagan *collegia* and the Christian communities is clear but superficial. The inner tone and spirit is entirely different. The *collegia* existed to cherish sentiment; the Church to express a life. The heathen *sodalitia* carried out beneficiary, convivial, and funerary functions; the Christian communities performed similar tasks, but they were tasks performed on the background of a living faith. One has only to compare a sympathetic account of the guilds and colleges which were so popular in the Graeco-Roman world [3] with a description of early Christian life to observe the wide dissimilarity beneath the surface.[4] Yc the Christian bishop was like the *episcopus*, *praefectus*, or *praesides* of a Benefit Club in some of his functions. He

[1] Headlam, *Doctrine of the Church*, pp. 103, 105–17; *Dict. of Christian Biog.*, vol. iii, p. 211.

[2] Ign., *ad Ephes.* iii; also *Doctrine of the Church*, p. 104.

[3] Dill, *Rom. Society*, pp. 251–86.

[4] Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, pp. 10–17.

had administrative duties to perform. He was the representative of the society.[1] And this position of usefulness, dignity, and risk tended to enhance his authority and enlarge his scope. Many of the duties of the office which he held were of a secular nature.[2] They did not belong to the office, but became attached to it, and it was by these secular duties that the Pagan government and the heathen population appraised him. To those inside, their bishop was the guardian of the faith, the transmitter of Divine gifts, the symbol of their spiritual unity, the representation and the bond, in the local church, of the great body of believers scattered East and West. He was their spokesman before the Imperial tribunal; often their first and always their most distinguished martyr when persecution fell upon them. These functions unfolded from within. But to those outside, the secular functions which attached themselves naturally, and were absorbed from the common life of the Empire, made the most impression.[3]

The Imperial government was suspicious of *collegia*. They so often harboured treasonable designs, and they were objectionable because they suggested an *imperium in imperio*. But since the tendency to such association could not be eradicated, it might be regulated. This wise policy met with considerable success. *Sodalitia* were allowed to be enrolled as Benefit Clubs, and Christian communities sooner or later availed themselves of the same privilege.[4] 'Christian communities, registered as *collegia tenuiorum*, held property. The *collegium* had to be registered in the name of some individual, who acted as its head and representative, and who held the property

[1] Ramsay, *Church in Roman Empire*, p. 430.

[2] Milman, *Hist. of Christianity*, vol. ii, p. 28. The details and minor charities were still administered by the diaconate.

[3] Hatch, *Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, pp. 29–32.

[4] Ramsay inclines to the opinion that this practice began as early as the reign of Hadrian (A. D. 130–140 ?).

that belonged to it. We can hardly doubt that the *episkopos* was the representative of the *collegium*, for he already acted as representative of the community in its relation to others.'[1] Thus the Christian communities gradually acquired a quasi-legal recognition, and their power was greatly augmented. At the same time the holding of property in the name of the bishop tended to increase the latter's importance, and secular functions contributed to the prestige of an official whose original authority was spiritual and remained essentially spiritual.[2] It also indicates how the Church of Christ was adapting herself to her environment, and absorbing the elements of the world to conquer the world. That there was loss in this process as well as gain is all too true, but the history of the Christian religion shows that it possessed within itself a Divine corrective.

CHAPTER VIII

DISCIPLINE

In the bosom of the ancient civilization the Catholic Church, developing its organic life according to its needs, and in harmony with its surroundings, was unconsciously protected, sometimes fiercely persecuted, later on recognized, and finally established as the religion of the State. Its institutions shaped and accommodated themselves in a natural way to the double task of sanctifying its own members and converting the Empire. 'The Power of the Keys', the censorship of morals always inherent in the Church, became of immense importance with the increase of hereditary Christians and with the influx of

[1] *Church in Roman Empire*, p. 431.

[2] Cf. Apost. Constitutions, VIII. v. 3–5; cited by Headlam, *Doctrine of the Church*, p. 130, notes.

great numbers who had imperfectly shed their heathenism. Ecclesiastical discipline was the defence of the Church against the invasion of the world in regard to both life and doctrine. Simple at first, it became from the manifold nature of its problems exceedingly complex. Codes of discipline developed, and were differentiated, according to the status of those concerned. There was a discipline of the Church at large; a discipline applicable to the clergy; a discipline appropriate to monastic life. After the adoption of Christianity by the Empire, not only is much legislation originating in the Church incorporated in the civil code, but the ecclesiastical authority can invoke the secular arm to enforce its decisions.[1] This latter, though natural, was a decidedly unwholesome development, and the Church in its more vital and elevated moods and periods has ever sought to break the unholy alliance. As to the Christian elements in the civil code, we can only be thankful they are there, and pray for their increase.

This matter of discipline suited the temperament of Latin Christianity. As the Greek mind from its metaphysical bent was specially fitted to grapple with religious thought, so the Latin character was suited to act strongly on the moral and administrative side. Of course the Greek portion of the Church developed its discipline, and the churches of North Africa, Italy, and Romanized Gaul produced reputable theologians. But, speaking broadly, the truth is as I have stated it. I have already attempted to show how the religious sanctions of the old Roman life developed a sense of law and order, respect for authority, fondness for ritual exactitude, and a limited but vigorous morality. From a certain native affinity the Roman temperament responded *ex animo* to Stoic teaching. Stoic cosmopolitanism sat well upon men who had fallen heir to the world. 'The new spirit of Roman Law embodied

[1] Art. 'Discipline', in *Dict. of Christian Antiq.*

in the theories of *ius gentium* and *ius naturae* (is) due to its influence.'[1] It was inevitable that men of this practical, mediocre type, instead of viewing Christianity as a life with the converted Hebrew (e.g. St. Paul), or a system of thought with the converted Hellene (e. g. Clement of Alexandria), should view it as a moral code. Christianity was bound to unfold itself on this side as well as on the other, and it was perhaps providential that the Latin, with his ethical sense and instinctive legality of mind, should be on hand to elaborate it. The geographical dispersion of the Christian communities rendered it difficult to express their essential unity, and local differences in ecclesiastical custom and Church discipline sometimes threatened to destroy it. While heresy was the prevailing defect in Eastern Christendom, schism was that of the West. And schism rose for the most part over matters of discipline. Accordingly the Latin with his talent for organization and administration, and his legal acumen, was chiefly, though not entirely, entrusted through natural causes with the task of collecting, framing, elaborating, and gaining universal recognition for, the disciplinary code of Christianity.[2] It is true that the Christian system of discipline had the most venerable of traditions, finding its basis in the Decalogue and the sanction of the Lord himself. It received amplification and interpretation in many collections of precepts produced, and in force, in the Eastern part of the Church ; but even there the administration of justice by the Imperial authority, emanating from the

[1] Arnold, art. 'Stoicism', in *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. xi, p. 863.

[2] 'circ. 500 A. D. Dionysius Exiguus, a Roman monk of great learning . . . made a collection of Greek canons, translating them into Latin' (art. 'Apostolic Canons', in *Dict. of Christian Antiq.*, vol. i, p. 110). It was the custom to make selection from preceding codes and lists of regulations, stamp the selection with authority, and allow the originals to take care of themselves.

West and having its seat in Rome, supplied the model and suggested the procedure of ecclesiastical tribunals.

In all this, however, it is necessary for us to remember that it was only the form, not the substance, of Christian morality which was influenced by external suggestion and pressure. If the Church was to preserve itself and be strong for its mission, it had perforce to become institutional, and in becoming so it adapted its system of discipline, and other structural features, to its environment. This discipline was not unduly repressive; for 'Blue Laws' and the blue spirit we have to go to schismatics, to Donatists and others. The Church in these early centuries always stood for humaneness, and looked towards restoration. Its disciplinary legislation was generally remedial, and only in the case of invincible impenitence was it absolutely condemnatory. Sincere disciples of Christ were still free, as in the first ages, to live above Law. The wise, strong, yet tolerant policy of the Church is illustrated in its treatment of the 'lapsed', which is too large and involved a subject to discuss in these pages. References to it are sufficient.[1] If the Church was to survive the violence of persecution (to mention one external force) it must exercise authority over its members. This was recognized clearly at the time. The African bishops write to Cyprian approving his disciplinary policy. 'Discipline, they say, is the only rudder by which the ship of the Church can be steered amid the storm.'[2]

[1] Benson, *Cyprian, His Life*, pp. 89–98, 106–7; Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, pp. 291–311 (in part).

[2] Farrar, *Lives*, vol. i, p. 293.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH AND THE EMPIRE

EVER before the Church stood the Imperial organization, an object of dread and yet of admiration. It represented a religion, a system of morality, a tone and temper which the Christian was called upon to renounce. Yet in some respects there was a close analogy between the two. The beginnings of each were humble and obscure. Each had a religious basis and motive. It is true the one was external and mundane; the other internal and supramundane; but the parallel remains, or is reinforced. The Republican Roman viewed with misgiving and contempt the cosmopolitan policy of the Empire; the unbelieving Jew feared and abhorred the catholic spirit of the religion of Christ. Each was striving to bring about the unity of mankind; the one by imposing law from without, the other by infecting with principles from within. The Empire finally failed because an external bond is never enough to keep men permanently together, and because law and administrative machinery, while compelling men's admiration, cannot retain their love. The Catholic Church won its astonishing success because it was essentially spiritual, and because the order and structure of its life were the response of its inner spirit to its own needs and to the conditions which surrounded it. The partial failure of the Church then, and since then, has been due to the employment of means which are alien to its spirit, to the attempted assimilation of material foreign to its nature. Leaven can transmute meal, but not sand or gravel. Complete success is bound up with the elimination of the baser elements. The difficulty has always been to distinguish one from the other. Not so much to distinguish the Divine

from the human, but to distinguish the wholesome human elements from the unwholesome. To his honour be it said, Tertullian with all his fierce fanaticism recognized the distinction. He scorns philosophy and the speculation of the schools, but he loves human nature and observes its fundamental likeness to the Divine.[1] What is to be done when grosser elements are incorporated? That is always a serious question to devout minds. I do believe, however, that the answer is not hasty separation, but the *increase of Vital Force*, a drawing upon the illimitable power which is at the heart of the Christian society. This will either subdue the heavy, stubborn material, or if it be entirely unassimilative, will throw it off in the process of development.[2]

It was well for the Church that it had this picture of external unity as represented in the Empire constantly before its eyes. It did not achieve more than a superficial success for reasons which I have indicated, but it was an impressive spectacle. During her life in the Roman Empire the Church incorporated many of the methods of the secular organization into her own system, and did it with advantage. From the unity which the Empire exhibited there flowed beneficial results in the maintenance of order, in the extension of material comfort and security, in the wider diffusion of education, in the care of those in need. The Church has ever been full of social enthusiasm, especially and naturally, for those of the household of faith as a first, but not exclusive, obligation. Its leaders were quick to note the efficiency of the State in providing its citizens with what it conceived they needed. Accordingly there was a rapid assimilation of features of organization

[1] de Pressensé, *The Early Christian Church*, section on Tertullian.

[2] I am not speaking here of individuals—they may be the objects of discipline—but of opinions, habits, customs, and superstitions.

and of administration on the part of the Church which enabled her to cope with her own problems.[1]

First of all then, the local communities unfolded their functions and powers under pressure of circumstances. Recognizing that their inherent unity with other Christians could not be restricted by geographical obstacles, they successfully overcame them through the agency of those officials to whom the Apostolate had bestowed their commission. Perhaps at first in many cases there was a body of presbyter-bishops. Let us for the moment assume that this was the case. As regards external relations it was soon found that the community required a single voice and a single representative. As regards the *fides apostolica*, it was found necessary that there should be a supreme exponent in each locality, one absolutely responsible for its conservation. Thus the bishops, in response to the inner urge of the Christian Ecclesia, striving to meet the conditions of its life, became the centres at once of Christian truth and Christian unity.[2]

'As individuals formed a particular church, so all the churches taken together formed the Catholic Church; and as the bishop with his presbyters formed the council of a particular community, so an assembly of bishops formed the council of a district or province. Synods were a natural product of the life of the Church.'[3] This would seem a most natural and inevitable step in the development of the Church in any circumstances, but it is not unlikely that the secular practice of the deputies from the chief towns of a province meeting together for deliberation

[1] We must, however, remember that beneficence was not the first aim either of Church or Empire. In the former instance, it was the fruit of its inner life; in the latter, a sagacious method of keeping a heterogeneous population contented.

[2] Hatch, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, pp. 94–8.

[3] Cheetham, *Church History: Early Period*, p. 137.

stimulated the natural development.[1] Before the close of the second century councils were held in Asia Minor on the question of the proper time for keeping Easter, and in reference to Montanism.[2] Generally the bishop of the capital of the province where the council was held would preside, not because he had greater spiritual authority than his fellow bishops, but for natural reasons based on the secular importance of the centre whence he came. As soon as the Empire became friendly to the Church, the practice of holding councils extended widely, and was systematized, with the local diocesan council at the bottom of the scale and the Oecumenical at the top.[3] The last was summoned by the Emperor, as it represented the Church of the whole Empire, and the secular ruler ratified the decrees of the council which he had called together. This, although in the case of Constantine merely honorific, was a symptom of the disease known as Byzantinism from which the Church suffered during the later centuries of the Roman Empire, and with which its Eastern portion was more afflicted than the Western.[4] Needless to say this subservience to secular authority is apt to recur. It has done so in England, for instance, and in Russia before the downfall of the Empire there was a flagrant example of it.

After the formal Christianization of the State, the tendency to follow political lines in the organization of the Church was very much quickened. The circumstances which suggested a city as a political, also suggested its suitability as an ecclesiastical, centre.[5] This was quite natural, and

[1] Hatch, *Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, pp. 165–6 (also notes, p. 165).

[2] Euseb., *H. E.*, v. 23, 2.

[3] Parochial (modern diocesan), Provincial, Patriarchal, Oecumenical.

[4] More familiarly known in its Western form as Erastianism.

[5] The transference of the civil centre of the Empire from Rome to Byzantium (Constantinople) left the Church in the Eternal City

in itself was a matter of convenience and nothing more, but the mapping out of the whole Empire for ecclesiastical purposes on the same plan as that of the State tended insensibly to lower the spiritual authority of the Church in men's minds. The apostolic character of the bishops was too often forgotten, from the fact that they presented themselves to the faithful not as the ambassadors of Christ, but as ministers of State.

Since there developed so close a parallel between the organization of the Church and the Empire, how was it that the Empire was destroyed and the Catholic Church survived? It is not easy to answer briefly. The answer of faith is brief enough, but faith does not carry conviction except to those who share it. To others I would say survival, or death, was not a question of organization so much as of vitality. The Empire grew out of the old Roman Republic, and we have seen how Augustus revived the old religious sanctions, and they persisted for some centuries because of 'certain fine conceptions lurking in them',[1] and Stoic ethics interpreted the Empire to itself as the instrument to be employed in the fulfilment of cosmopolitan dreams. Such was the inspiration of Emperors like Marcus Aurelius, but the inspiration was not equal to the task, and when the inspiration ceased the fabric slowly tumbled to pieces. The conversion of the Empire to Christianity arrested decay but could not prevent it. Men soon lost interest in defending from external foes what was dying at its heart, so the earnest-minded among them transferred their hopes from the *civitas mundi*[2] to the

without a rival, and was one of the natural causes which led to the growth of the Papal system. It is a subject outside the limits of this work, so I leave it alone.

[1] Ramsay, *Church in Roman Empire*, p. 192.

[2] The Empire in name and in idea persisted in a semi-Christianized form far into modern history, but it was never realized except in the most shadowy way. See Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*.

civitas Dei. St. Augustine voices well the feeling of his contemporaries in that masterpiece of his, *The City of God*. It was almost with relief that men saw the old world break up before the onslaught of barbarians. ' (The world) shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold (it) up, and (it) shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.'[1] *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

But while the Imperial system depended upon religious sanctions which had lost their vitality, and upon an ethical idea to which there was no popular response, and in which there was no general confidence, the Catholic Church depended upon an inner principle which drew Life from its Founder. It was an organic life, not an external organization, and it unfolded itself to meet its needs. It drew elements of nourishment from the soil in which it was planted, and flourished mightily. Its growth was natural, and consequently strong and wholesome. Antagonism and persecution tended to invigorate rather than to destroy it. It unfolded its organization from within to meet every exigency and every eventuality, and yet accepted those influences and elements from without which were congruous, or at least not utterly incongruous, to its own nature. Thus, like the moth or butterfly, it used the chrysalis to support its growing life, but the time came when it no longer needed such protection and such support. Then it sprang forth, the one beautiful, coherent, organic entity in that period of confusion, ruin, and decay.

But from the wreckage the Church did not only save itself. It was, as it were, the executor and trustee of the Empire now defunct.[2] While the superstructure of civilization collapsed, some of the foundations remained. For

[1] Heb. i. 10–11.

[2] The Eastern, or Byzantine Empire, which survived till A.D. 1453, gradually loses its world-wide significance.

instance, the municipal system survived, a survival which was probably due chiefly to the close association of ecclesiastical administration with the life of the cities and towns of the Empire.[1] The clergy were not only spiritual officers but often civil magistrates, and the barbarian invaders settled down in the midst of a society, the power of which was indefinable but irrefragable. This became their instructor in the arts of civilization; their teacher and guide in religion. The social order which the Northern invasions temporarily submerged, and which later on absorbed the invaders, was to a considerable extent Christianized. And in the midst of it there stretched in every quarter of the Western world that 'strange organized polity', with its officials and its mysterious rites—'defenceless in the midst of never-ceasing war, yet inspiring reverence, ruling by the word of conviction and knowledge and persuasion, arresting and startling the new conquerors with the message of another world'.[2]

[1] Guizot, *History of Civilization* (Hazlitt's translation), p. 36.

[2] Church, *Gifts of Civilization*, pp. 309, 317. Quoted by Bright, *The Roman See in the Early Church*, p. 337.

EPILOGUE

Lest I should protract this study to unreasonable length, I have placed limitations alike upon its range and upon its depth. I have made such a selection of topic and person as seemed in my poor judgement to elucidate and advance the theme. But I have been conscious throughout that there are other methods of treating the subject, and other illustrations which might have been employed with greater effect. In fact I realize that I have essayed a task which is beyond my powers, but I comfort myself with the thought that it is also beyond the powers of any single writer. My apology for dealing with a subject which is inexhaustible is that in my opinion the principles of inquiry and research indicated will repay study, and that their application may be helpful in the solution of many of the problems of modern Christendom.

The leaven, the three measures of meal; the Vital Force, the elements of humanity. Is the illustration exhausted by an application to the individual man compounded of body, soul, and spirit, and the Grace of God working upon him? Is it not rather true that the individual man is here a microcosm of human elements on the universal scale? In humanity as a whole there are three elements which correspond to those of the individual. These are generally intermingled in a way which makes analysis difficult, but there were three races of antiquity which presented severally these characteristics in a striking and unique manner—the Hebrew, the Hellene, and the Latin. For our purpose the Hebrew no longer counts, his characteristic quality has been drained off into Christianity; the Hellene made his contribution, and is no longer remark-

able ; the Latin is overlaid with Celtic, Teutonic, and other racial ingredients, but at any rate his genius still persists in another form. Yet originally the Hebrew ' measure ' as represented by its best—its prophets, its poets, the deeper principles of its Law, the inner meaning of its worship—gave the finest examples of spiritual capacity, the power of receiving religious impressions and translating them into life. The Hellene possessed in a unique degree the power of abstract thought, the ability to give intellectual expression to transcendent ideas ; in a mental sense he may be said, as exemplified by his best, to have discovered God. The Latin had the sense of law, a practical power of organization and administration, and he was fitted by nature to construct a framework of society, and give an opportunity for, and contribute towards, the development of corporate life embodying a revelation which man had received and a religion he had thought out. This is not to say that even here the elements were not mixed. A pure, spiritual nature would be supramundane ; a pure, intellectual one, a monstrosity ; a purely legalistic one, a machine. There were Hebrews who could organize like Ezra, the scribe, and many others. Indeed there is, apart from spiritual capacity (which was by no means always present), a strong affinity between the Hebrew and the Latin in their legalistic traits. Nor would any one deny the strong religious instincts and powers of Heraclitus, or the spiritual beauty of Plato. I cannot think at the moment of any deeply religious mind in Pagan Rome, unless by a paradox I should mention Lucretius, and, of course, Vergil. Christian Rome exhibits them in abundance (which shows the transmuting power of the Vital Force), but the finest examples were probably not pure Latins. There is a suggestion of North Africa in the impetuosity of Tertullian ; the warmth and passion of Augustine. I suppose Celtic environment, if not blood,

had much to do with Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose of Milan,[1] and Vincentius of Lerins.

And these elements recur. Indeed I cannot think of any which are more persistent and more stable in human nature. They are really the characteristics which from a religious point of view are essential. But they recur in varying proportion in the different races of mankind. The modern Frenchman and Hellene have been compared, and there is much in the comparison. So has the Englishman and the Roman. I venture myself to see in Slavonic races generally, and in the Russian in particular, a more widely diffused spiritual capacity, but a less balanced one, than was to be found in the Hebrew race of old. Moving still Eastward, we have the Hindu, the Japanese, the Chinese. The first, the Hebrew ; the second, the Hellene ; the third, a sort of arrested Latin. I have no doubt as we learn more about what are called the backward races we shall be able to trace on their own level these three persistent elements of human nature. Mingled, of course, but still there—the ratio of the mixture still marking off the capacities of one race from those of another.

Now it is upon these elements that the Vital Force has acted, is now acting, and will continue to act. I have attempted to note by typical examples the effect of this action, and also some of the reactions in the cases where the first contact took place. I believe that the order of contact was in the Divine Purpose. It is all so natural and inevitable. The Vital Force kindles Hebrew receptiveness, the resultant illuminates Greek thought, and in the Roman Empire the fresh resultant finds its means of growth and develops its corporate life. Thought and organism were there in embryo in New Testament times, but the one would have been dissipated and the other crushed, had they not found in their environment the

[1] In what was formerly cis-Alpine Gaul.

materials of growth. There was no fresh revelation, no new discovery. Everything was there in the original germ, but the life unfolded, and as it unfolded it drew from humanity the elements suited to itself. Hence arose an infinite variety of spiritual experience, interpretations, inferences, and deductions, new methods, forms, and different classes of administration. Some are no doubt permanent ; others are of long duration but ultimately are cast off ; others are purely ephemeral ; some are positively false and wrong. They abide or disappear according as they correspond to the essential character of the organic life. So heresies arise, but vanish again ; schisms rend the Church, but are healed. The disunion of Christendom from which we are now suffering has a long history, and the causes of it are complex, but somehow one feels to-day that the world is passing through a revolutionary phase in which things hated and things loved alike will disappear, and with them will disappear also the barriers which have kept the disciples of Christ asunder. The City of God has survived many a storm ; it witnessed the break-up of the strongest and most compact sovereignty that perhaps ever existed, and it nourished the barbarian races of Europe, and developed our modern civilization. If it should be God's Will that this should collapse, well and good ! We shall still dwell in the City of God, ' a city glorious beyond compare, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and fares as a stranger in the midst of the impious, or as it shall abide in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for, expecting until " righteousness shall return unto judgement ", and it obtains, by virtue of its excellence, final victory and perfect peace.' [1]

[1] St. Aug., *de Civ. Dei*, preface (paraphrased).

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